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THE BAPTISTS AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

MEMORIAL,

RELATING TO THE

BENGALI AND OTHER VERSIONS OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT,

MADE BY BAPTIST MISSIONARIES IN INDIA.

PRESENTED TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD BEXLEY,

PRESIDENT,

THE VICE-PRESIDENTS, THE COMMITTEE, AND PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

OF THE

British and Foreign Bible Society,

January 6, 1840,

BY THE

COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

LONDON :

G. WIGHTMAN, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1840.

AT A SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION,

Held Dec. 17, 1839,

THOMAS PEWTRESS, ESQ., in the Chair.

Resolved Unanimously,

THAT the cordial thanks of this Committee be presented to the Rev. Edward Steane, for the highly valuable Memorial to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which he has drawn up by the desire of this Committee, and now read.

Resolved Unanimously,

THAT the Document now read be adopted as the Memorial of this Committee, and be presented as such to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at their next meeting, by the Rev. Edward Steane, the Rev. John Dyer, and the Rev. J. H. Hinton, A.M.

TO THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The following Memorial, relating to the Bengali and other Versions of the New Testament, made by Baptist Missionaries in India, is presented with respect and Christian courtesy,

BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

IN the document now submitted to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, it is intended to make another, and final effort, to induce a reversal of the measure by which translations of the New Testament executed by Baptist missionaries in India have been denied the support of that institution.

In attempting this object, the Memorialists are impelled by a solemn conviction of the duty they owe to the truth, to the heathen, and to the Bible Society itself.

The question at issue is one affecting not simply their own denomination. It involves principles of common concern to all who are engaged in giving the Sacred Scriptures to the nations, the recognition of which alone can, in their opinion, relieve the Bible Society from embarrassment, and enable it with an equal hand to extend its encouragement to all faithful versions. Nothing, they conceive, is more to be deprecated by those who love it most, than that it should persist in a line of conduct which lays it open to the

charge of suppressing any portion of God's truth. If such an allegation can be sustained against the Society, the warmest friends it has must condemn its policy, and all good men will approve the effort to recover it from so perilous a position.

Until the adoption of those proceedings which form the subject of complaint, the Baptist body took an equal interest in the Society's labours with all other denominations, and they are still most earnestly desirous to be permitted to continue among its supporters. They will regard it as a calamity to be separated in such a cause from their fellow Christians; nor will they be the parties to sever the bond. If they must adopt an independent course of action it shall be because they are compelled. If they can no longer be fellow-labourers in the foreign field of Bible distribution, it shall be because they are thrust out.

Should they, on the one hand, be able to show that the terms proposed by the Committee of the Bible Society in order to the Baptist body receiving support to its versions are such as cannot be complied with, both because, as a general rule, they are impracticable, and, where practicable, morally subversive of the authority of conscience, and of the primary and imperative obligations of a translator of the inspired volume; and, on the other hand, that the proper course for the Bible Society to pursue is that for which the Baptist body pleads, the just conclusion will be obvious to every impartial mind; and the memorialists, having discharged their duty, will quietly leave the result to their brethren and to God.

The terms proposed to the Baptists by the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society are

communicated in their resolution of the 1st of July, 1833, which is expressed in the following words :—

“ That this Committee would cheerfully afford assistance to the missionaries connected with the Baptist Missionary Society in their translation of the Bengali New Testament, provided the Greek terms relating to baptism be rendered, either, according to the principle adopted by the translators of the authorized English version, by a word derived from the original, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society.”*

This resolution gives the translator the alternative of rendering the Greek terms relating to baptism, either by a word derived from the original, as is done in the English version, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by the other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society. It is alleged by the Memorialists that neither of these alternatives can be acted upon as a general rule.

They begin with the latter, and restrict themselves first to its application to their own case. And they respectfully ask, what terms they are which would describe baptism in a manner unobjectionable to all denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society? Where in any language can such terms be found? Until immersion, and sprinkling, and pouring, mean the same thing, or until there ceases to be a difference of opinion as to which of these modes is exclusively right, it is clear that no such terms are likely to be discovered. Moreover, if it be laid down as the rule, that Baptists, in their versions, must employ terms

* Appendix A. 1

“unobjectionable” to non-immersionists, of course it must be the rule also, that non-immersionists must, in versions made by them, employ terms “unobjectionable” to Baptists, since they are one of the denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society. But the Baptist members of the Bible Society contend that the Greek words employed to describe the Christian rite have one meaning, and one only, and consequently, until that meaning, and that alone, were given, they could not cease to object.

There is, moreover, a fallacy involved in this part of the resolution of the Committee, the exposure of which deprives it of much of its apparent reasonableness, while it confirms what has just been said of its impracticability as a rule. By “the other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society,” are of course meant all who belong to it besides the Baptists. But it is overlooked, in this mode of putting the case, that, in relation to the question in hand, all these denominations merge into one. For all the purposes of this controversy, the Bible Society consists but of two sections, immersionists and non-immersionists, and it has the appearance at least of disingenuousness (though the memorialists do not impute it to the Committee) that it should be otherwise represented. As between these two parties then, and there are no other within the view of the subject, so long as one of them shall consider immersion, not an accident, but entering into the essential nature of the ordinance of baptism, while the other, professing to regard the mode as an indifferent circumstance, in practice altogether discards immersion, the rule must of necessity be perfectly inoperative. Ever to have conceived of it as laying a

ground of union between them, was but a subtle delusion, and for the Bible Society now to persist in it must inevitably lead to separation.

But the spirit of this rule extends far beyond the particular case of the Baptists; and, impracticable as it is in reference to them, it is even more so when taken in that extent of application to which impartiality requires it should be carried. Did it not occur to the Committee, when assigning as a reason for laying down this rule, that the Bible Society is "composed of persons holding on this subject widely different opinions,"* that its members hold "widely different opinions" on other subjects also, subjects moreover affecting, some of them, not the ceremonial, but the vital doctrines of Christianity, and quite as likely to occasion embarrassment in the translation of the Scriptures? The episcopalian, the presbyterian, and the congregationalist, entertain views widely diverse from one another of the rendering of the terms *ἐπίσκοπος* (bishop), *διάκονος* (deacon), *πρεσβύτερος* (presbyter), *ἐκκλησία* (church). And besides these, as already intimated, there are disputed words relating to doctrines, such for example as *προγινώσκω* (to foreknow), *προορίζω* (to predestinate), *τετάγμενος* (ordained), *ἐκλογή* (election), *κλήσις* (calling), *μετάνοια* (repentance), *δικαίωσις* (justification), *απολύτρωσις* (redemption). Of course these words must be subjected to the same process; nor these only, but every other respecting the signification of which denominations differ; a process which shall either convey them in an untranslated form into other languages, or translate them, not with scrupulous philological accuracy, but so as to unite the suffrages of

* Resolutions, confirmed April 4, 1836. Appendix B.

controversialists. The Bible Society includes among its members, to say nothing of minor, or, in a theological point of view, less important sects, Protestants and Roman Catholics, members of the Greek church, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians. Is deference to be paid to the conflicting sentiments of these several parties? Is a translation of the word of God to speak nothing at variance with their peculiar and distinctive dogmas? Or, lest it should, are all words in debate among them to be left untranslated? It may be confidently put to every considerate person, if the former of these alternatives be not absolutely impossible; while, if the latter be adopted, the Scriptures might as well be withholden altogether, for they must thus become an unintelligible jargon.

The improbability of finding terms which shall express two or more meanings essentially differing from each other, as must be done if versions are to contain no words objectionable to the different denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society, is so obvious, that another sentence need not be written to expose the futility of the rule that requires it; but if it be thought that disputed terms may be transferred, let the experiment be made upon some of those already mentioned. In the following passages these Greek terms are expressed in words derived from the original. "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid and sick of a fever; and he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose and diaconized them," Matt. viii. 14, 15. "This is a true saying, if a man desire episcopacy, he desireth a good work," 1 Tim. iii. 1. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, episcopising not by constraint,

but willingly," 1 Pet. v. 2. "For the gifts and clesis of God are without repentance," Rom. xi. 29. "Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your clesis and ekology sure," 2 Pet. i. 10. "Even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto dicaosis of life," Rom. v. 18. "In whom we have apolutrosis through his blood," Eph. i. 7. Is any thing further needed to demonstrate the absurdity of such a practice ?

Nor is the difficulty thus stated an hypothetical case, suggested merely for the sake of illustration. It already presses in a practical form. "As was to be expected (says the Rev. W. H. Pearce, in a letter dated Calcutta, September 10, 1836), since the Bible Society interfered about baptism, the words above referred to* are become the subject of difficulty; and brethren in India, instead of translating the original terms for all of them, are at this moment about to introduce the Greek words into the native languages. Calling, Election, Justification, Redemption, &c., must in time follow: and the Christian church, in giving the New Testament, will then present to a heathen a work, although in his own language, perfectly unintelligible to the best informed of his countrymen."†

This other alternative allowed by the resolution, of rendering the Greek terms relating to baptism by a word derived from the original, as is done in the English Version, is no less incapable of general adoption on another ground. In the English version these words are left untranslated, the Greek terms themselves being

* "Church, Congregation, Bishop, Bishoprick, Presbyter, Deacon, Deaconness," &c.

† Bap. Mag. 1837, p. 307. Appendix C.

used with an English termination; but there are some languages, perhaps many, into which it is impossible to transfer foreign words. The Chinese language is in point, which being written, not with alphabetic letters, but in monosyllabic characters, does not admit of the introduction of exotic terms in the manner prescribed. Not only, therefore, has Dr. Marshman translated the words in question, but Dr. Morrison also. Of the former indeed it might have been expected, agreeably with the uniform practice of the Baptists; but, in fact, neither of them was left to his option. They might select the words by which to translate—but translate they must, since to transfer is impossible. The Cherokee, as the memorialists have learned from competent authority, is another language into which, from the peculiarity of its construction, translators are compelled to give vernacular renderings. The pædobaptist missionaries accordingly, by whom a translation of the New Testament has been made for the use of that people, have not transferred the terms relating to baptism, but have translated them—and translated them by words signifying to immerse, and immersion.* Since in these instances the impracticability of the rule has been already ascertained, it is surely no improbable presumption, that there may be others; at all events these are sufficient to show that it must of necessity be of partial application.

But the Memorialists feel it to be their duty to present this objectionable resolution before the Committee of the Bible Society in another light; showing that, if it be impracticable as a general rule, it is

* Christian Review, No. 1, p. 133.

equally to be condemned as subversive of the integrity of translators.

Granting that, in the particular case of the Baptists, the rule might be complied with in the Bengali Version, and in all instances where the genius of the language allowed it, if not by translating the words in question into unobjectionable terms, yet by leaving them untranslated; this could be done only by putting human requirements in the place of conscience, and sacrificing truth and inspiration to expediency.

The Memorialists would most respectfully beg the Committee to reflect upon the imperative obligations and solemn responsibility of a translator of the Sacred Scriptures, and then to consider if it would be right before God to bind him in the shackles imposed by their rule. He who undertakes to convey Divine revelation into a new tongue, assumes an office with which scarcely another can be compared whose duties are equally momentous or responsible. By no quality of a moral kind ought he to be so eminently distinguished as by scrupulous conscientiousness. Unyielding integrity must be combined with literary ability, or he can never be deemed competent to his task. And as these qualities should be the guarantee, as far as his own character is concerned, that his work will be done faithfully, so ought he to be most jealously sheltered from every influence coming from without which might interfere with his judgment. His first, and last, and all-absorbing solicitude must be, to give the exact contents of the document, without suppression, without addition, and without alteration. If the meaning of a passage, or of a word, be hid under an unintelligible phrase, it might as well be omitted, since that

part of divine revelation is lost to the reader. The translator, in fact, defrauds him of so much of the truth. How, with the fear of God before his eyes, can he do this? How could the Committee of the Bible Society require him to do it? And yet this is what their rule demands. There are certain terms which, under peril of losing their support, he is not to translate. Though professedly occupied in giving to the heathen "all the words of this life," and bound to do so by obligations the most imperative and awful, as exactly and completely as his ability enables him, there are some words the meaning of which he must systematically withhold. And why? Because in themselves they are unintelligible? No such thing. Because the rendering he would give is unfaithful? Nothing of the kind; but because such rendering is considered objectionable by some of his fellow-christians who are members of the Bible Society. The question then comes to this, Are human opinions to control the Bible, or is the Bible to control human opinions? The Committee of the Bible Society say in effect the former; for their rule determines that, since the New Testament will not speak in a certain manner, it shall not speak at all. They insist that the meaning shall be pushed aside, blinked, studiously suppressed, where it does not harmonize with the creed of all the parties composing that institution. Who, it may be asked, that makes any claim to moral independence, would put his neck under such a yoke? What conscientious man could do it? With him it must be no question in what degree the meaning of the text may coincide with or differ from the sentiments or the practice of any section of the Christian Church. His duty is

plain and imperative. If he knows "the mind of the Spirit," he is bound to express it. Should he wilfully falsify the record by mistranslation, or should he "add to," or "take away from the words of the book," he would be held by common consent to have perpetrated a crime of the darkest hue. But the Memorialists desire it may be seriously weighed, how far he falls short of the same censure who, in deference to the opinions of others, imposes a doubtful, or a double sense on the Scriptures, instead of scrupulously adhering to their exact grammatical interpretation; or who, by studious concealment, keeps back part of the counsel of God. For themselves, they dare not risk the consequences of such a course, nor recommend it to their honoured missionaries. To act in this manner would, in their view, be to violate a solemn trust, to betray the truth, to endanger souls, and to hazard at least the tremendous judgments denounced in the closing sentences of the inspired canon. If the support of their fellow-christians in the work of Biblical translation can be procured only at such a price, by them it cannot be procured at all. They must persist in urging upon their translators still to pursue the course marked out by the noble-minded Tyndal, who, in reference to his translation, says, "I call God to recorde as against the daye we shall appeare before oure Lorde Jesus Christ, to give reckonyng of our doinges, that I never altered one syllable of Godes word agaynst my conscyence, nor wolde do thys day, yf all that is in earthe, whether it be honoure, pleasure, or ryches, myght be geven me."*

It avails nothing, the Memorialists submit, against the force of this argument, that what is required of

* Letter to John Fryth.

the Baptist translators is sanctioned by the English Version; for the plea of precedent can never make that right which is in itself essentially wrong.

Besides which, waiving for the present their particular case, they entertain on many grounds the most serious objections against erecting that version into a standard for other translations. 1. It is well known under what circumstances the English Authorised Version was made. The translators were compelled by royal mandate to retain the old ecclesiastical words.* But he who imposes such a condition, and he who submits to it, are alike guilty of infringing the liberty of conscience, and of laying violent hands on the truth itself. Does the Bible Society wish to perpetuate the odious despotism of the Stuarts, by still putting fetters on the translators of the Bible? 2. Moreover, if the English Version is to be followed in one instance, by analogy of reasoning it must be followed in all similar instances; and this would lead, in cases where a difference of opinion obtains, to that transferring of terms, the absurdity and impracticability of which have been already shown. 3. How, again, is it possible for a conscientious translator to conform to this standard? The difficulties of translating, it might be supposed, are great and numerous enough without the aggravation which such a necessity implies. Instead of constructing his Version, as an erudite philologist, according to sound canons of interpretation, he must recur at every step to the work of his English predecessors. His inquiry must be, not what is the true meaning of a passage, and how may it be

* Historical Account of the several English Translations of the Bible, by Anthony Johnson, A. M., in Bishop Watson's Theological Tracts, Vol. iii. p. 96.

rendered with fidelity—but what is the sense put upon it by the English Version. Not what the uncorrupted originals may dictate must be followed, but the originals modified by the party views of polemical ecclesiastics, and the caprice of a semi-papistical monarch. A man who should translate on this principle, the Memorialists hesitate not to say, would be totally unworthy of the office he had assumed; nor would it be safe to trust the conveyance of the words of life to the nations to his hands. 4. Still further, they would ask wherein the virtue consists of introducing the faults of the English Version into new translations. Admitting, that under the circumstances of its production, it is an admirable work, and even better executed in the main than might have been apprehended, no admirers of it have yet been so enthusiastic as to pronounce it immaculate. On all hands it is confessed to betray the marks of human imperfection. The Committee themselves say of it, “Errors are to be found in it which the humblest scholar could not only point out but correct. Errors too there are which obscure the sense in some important instances.”* Why should these errors be propagated? If there be thought to be a necessity for leaving them uncorrected, at least, let them remain where they are. If we must have them at home, let us not send them abroad. What benevolence is there in afflicting the heathen with our calamities? Every Christian would surely say, give them the unadulterated word, whatever you choose in regard to yourselves. If it be said the resolution of the Bible Society does not contemplate this, but refers only to certain words in which it requires the English Version to be followed; the reply is obvious and conclusive—

* Ann. Report, 1839, p. cxxi.

those very words constitute one of its most glaring faults. They are words, to all but Greek scholars, without a meaning; and the Bible Society determines that these same words in their unintelligibleness shall be transferred into foreign tongues, thus for ever withholding from the heathen part of the Word of God.

5. And lastly, the Memorialists cannot refrain from expressing both their surprise and deep regret that the British and Foreign Bible Society should seem in any way to give its sanction to the Popish practice of substituting a translation of the inspired volume as the standard of truth, in the room of the original scriptures. If Protestants are right in setting up one version as a model, how will it be shown that Romanists are wrong in putting that honour upon another? The decree of the Council of Trent and the resolution of the Committee in Earl Street are in their principle exactly similar, and alike unsound and dangerous. The one confers infallibility on the Vulgate, the other makes the English Version the judge, from whose decision there lies no appeal. For all the ordinary purposes of translation, indeed, the Greek New Testament may be used; but, where Christian denominations hold conflicting sentiments, it shall be instantly laid aside, or, what is the same thing, shall not be deemed of authority, nor be taken as the rule. Precisely in that crisis where the importance of having access to the original is chiefly felt, the Committee of the Bible Society takes it out of the translator's hand. Such a procedure, it is submitted, cannot be justified on Protestant principles. If it is to be defended, it must take shelter under the obnoxious plea that there resides an authority somewhere, and no matter where, whether in a general council of the Church of Rome, or in the Com-

mittee of the Bible Society, which has a right to modify the Word of God.

The Memorialists venture to hope, that the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society will now see that their resolution of July 1, 1833, has placed that great institution in an unfortunate and unsafe position—a position of inextricable embarrassment, and inconsistent both with the claims of conscience, and with the deference due to that Volume which it is its honour and duty to give to all people in their mother tongue.

The consistent course for the Bible Society to pursue would be, they conceive, to give aid to all versions into new languages which, upon the authority of competent scholars, are ascertained to be faithful. They beg to trespass upon the continued attention of the Committee while they endeavour to show the reasonableness of the course they recommend.

It is obvious to remark, that such a principle of action is impartial. It favours no denomination at the expense of the rest, and it excludes none from its proper share of patronage through the jealousy of the rest. It gives credit to missionaries and translators of all sections of the Christian Church for equal sincerity in their desires to communicate the tidings of “the common salvation.” It leaves them to pursue their great work free from human embarrassment, and solely under the influence of their responsibility to God. The Baptist body, standing as they do on this plea of liberty, would be the last to deny it to their fellow-servants. If a Pædobaptist translator conscientiously believes that sprinkling or pouring is the meaning of βαπτίζω, let him thus render the word. As an honest

man he is bound to do so ; and if, upon the authority of competent scholarship his version be certified to be faithful, let the Bible Society support it.

To act on this principle of supporting versions simply on the ground of their fidelity, would relieve the Bible Society from the irksome necessity of listening to denominational complaints, and of adjudicating in matters so much beside their province as differences in sentiment existing among them. By their present rule the Committee of the Bible Society erect themselves into a tribunal, before which the various denominations composing it may severally bring their complaint, whenever words are used in a version which they consider objectionable. If Episcopalians render *ἐπίσκοπος* bishop, the Congregationalist complains ; and if Congregationalists translate *ἐκκλησία* congregation, the Episcopalian is aggrieved. The Committee having, by the rule laid down, invited the appeal, are bound to hear the allegations of both parties, and to settle the difference ; and the differences of all parties among the members of the Bible Society who may conceive their peculiar views to be in a similar manner endangered. The Committee have done this in the case of the Pædobaptist complaint against Baptist versions, and of course equity demands that they should not shrink from doing it in other instances. If it be replied, that, so far from taking upon themselves to settle the difference in the case of the Baptists, they declared* it to be “no part of the duty of the Committees or Sub-Committees to adjust such differences of opinion,” and have therefore fallen back upon the practice resorted to in the English Version, this is the very thing which settles it. The moment it is deter-

* Resolutions of April 4, 1836.—Appendix B.

mined, in reference to any given word, that the translator shall conform to a particular model, or forfeit the Society's patronage, the whole question is closed: the difference *is* adjusted, and adjusted by the Committee. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the manner in which the Committee express themselves in part of the words just recited. Aware that it would impose upon them a most invidious and a perfectly hopeless task, were they required to mediate between contending denominations, and knowing that it forms no part of their duty as the executive of the Bible Society to attempt it, with great reason they may decline to undertake any such office. All the Memorialists regret is that they did not do so at first, and all they ask is that they will retrace their steps, and always decline it in future. Would the Bible Society adopt the rule they recommend, a simple, uniform, and satisfactory answer would be given in every such case of complaint. The Committee, rising above all sectarian partialities, and standing on that Catholic ground which was ever wont to be the foundation of the Society, would say, "Of denominational differences we take no cognizance here. We ask not, and we decline to know, in what respects versions may favour the views of any section of the Christian Church, or be inimical to them. We patronize none but versions duly accredited for fidelity, and we patronize these alike."

Another advantage of this rule is, that it disencumbers the Committee of the Bible Society of the responsibility which belongs to the translators who make the versions, and the scholars who attest them. It is no reflection on the Committee to say, that this is a species of responsibility which they are altogether incom-

petent to assume. Nor could it have been supposed that it is a responsibility they were likely to covet. Who ever imagined that to them belonged the functions of philologists and critics? By the resolution, however, of requiring translations to conform to the authorised English Version in the words relating to baptism, they have imposed upon themselves this burden. It will surely provide them enough of difficult and unaccustomed labour to examine all the versions they take under their patronage, in order to ascertain that there be in none of them an infraction of the rule. The practice, moreover, of transferring words, if once adopted for the reason they assign, can never be restricted to those words. Many more, as the Memorialists have shown, are in a precisely similar predicament. Either they must be transferred, or translated in a way against which no members of the Bible Society can object; and the Committee make themselves responsible to all the denominations that in every case this is done. It must be evident that no committee can discharge such a trust. They themselves tell us in their last report* that they know it to be impossible. "They are not ashamed to confess (they say) that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones is such, that they are compelled to shrink from it." How much is it to be regretted that they did not perceive this before they adopted a resolution which pledges them to undertake it! It is clear, however, that the resolution is now a mere nullity, and translators may expect that the undivided responsibility of versions will henceforth remain with them

* p. cxx.

To adopt this plan, lastly, is the only way in which the Bible Society can discharge its duty as the dispenser of God's word to the nations. Any other will involve its conductors in the serious charge of tampering with the Scriptures. Once to take up the ground that fidelity is not the one great and paramount property which shall recommend translations to their assistance, is to quit the rock for the quicksand. It little matters then, whether the circumstance commending them be their conformity to a previously existing version, or the absence of terms unobjectionable to antagonist denominations, or any other circumstance upon which the Committee of the Bible Society may resolve to insist: the only safe position is abandoned. No security is thenceforth possessed against a thousand influences which, through the medium of the Bible Society itself, may mutilate and corrupt the Bible. The object of that institution should no doubt be, above all things else and at all hazards, to give the contents of the inspired canon to foreign nations in the most perspicuous and perfect manner in its power; not a part of its contents, but the whole; not its contents modified or obscured, but as near as possible to their exact import, and written so plain that "he may run that reads." To the fact of the western nations not possessing the Scriptures in a complete form in their vernacular tongues is mainly to be attributed the prevalence of the grand apostacy. So at least the Bible Society believes, as a writer informs us, who it is understood is well known and in high estimation with the Committee, and the Memorialists agree with him. "You believed (he says, addressing their senior secretary) that the chief success of the Romish priests

in twisting to their own purpose certain doubtful or erroneous renderings, arose from their not giving to the people the *entire* word of God in a language which they could understand.*” If this really be the opinion held in Earl Street, it is in point of principle all the Memorialists can desire, since it must make the Committee supremely anxious to give to the people of the East the “entire” New Testament, without concealment of a single word. They will only add, that the Christian community at large cannot but rejoice to know that the views of the Committee in relation to it are so definite and so just, and that, warned by the dreadful mischief that has ensued in Europe through leaving parts of the sacred record untranslated, they will vigilantly guard against any approach to that popish practice in the versions of Asia, and of all the rest of the world.

Will the Committee now allow the Memorialists to recur to the rejected Baptist translations, and especially to the Bengali? Of this translation the most ample and unquestionable testimonials, vouching its faithfulness, were laid before the Committee of the Bible Society, when they were solicited to aid its publication.† No imputation affecting its fidelity is indeed cast upon it either in India or in England. The Auxiliary Committee in Calcutta, at a full meeting, assembled for the purpose of deciding which they should adopt,

* Remarks on a pamphlet recently circulated, &c., in two Letters, to The Rev. A. Brandram, M. A. By T. H., understood to be from the pen of the Rev. Joseph Jowett, M. A., Superintendent of the Translating and Editorial Department.

† Letter from Baptist Missionaries, May 25, 1832. Appendix A.

were unanimous in giving it the preference;* and the Bible Society has accordingly printed a large edition of it in Calcutta, by consent of the Baptist Missionaries;† and subsequently, without their consent, under the supervision of Dr. Hæberlin, another edition, in the Roman character, with the English in opposite pages,‡ in London, substituting on their own responsibility the Greek words relating to baptism for those Bengali words which the translators had used. With this exception the Memorialists believe they are correct in stating the translation as printed by the Bible Society to be in all respects what it was when it came out of the translator's hands: if there be any other difference they have not heard of it, nor have they any reason to suppose such a liberty would be taken. For though the Auxiliary Committee in Calcutta expressed a wish to make a "few other such alterations as a Sub-Committee of Bengali scholars should recommend," this proposal was declined by the Missionaries, and does not appear to have been persisted in.§ Why the alteration was made in the words relating to baptism appears from the resolutions of the Committee, and that reason is, not because they were translated unfaithfully, but simply because they were translated.

Here then is a translation of the New Testament, acknowledged on all hands to be the best which has hitherto been made into the Bengali language, which the Bible Society might give to the millions of heathen, for whom, with so much diligence and carefulness, it has been prepared, but which they will not

* Letter from Rev. W. Yates, Aug. 1, 1835. Appendix B.

† Ibid. Appendix B. ‡ Bible Society's Report, 1839. p. lvii.

§ Letter from Rev. W. Yates, Aug. 1, 1835. Appendix B.

give, solely because the words relating to baptism are translated by terms signifying immersion.

It will strike every considerate person, the Memorialists conceive, that the Committee would not refuse to circulate such a translation for the reason assigned, unless that reason itself involved some strong ground for their decision, or were supported by extrinsic considerations of great moment. Either it will be supposed that the translation in question is unfaithful, though the version in general be not so, or that it is an innovation, or contrary to the past usage of the Society, to circulate versions having these words so translated, or to its constitution, or else that it is sectarian. The Memorialists think it due, therefore, to all parties concerned to inquire how the matter stands in each of these particulars.

Is it then an unfaithful rendering which the Bengali version gives of these words? It is but justice to the Committee to acknowledge that they have never alleged any such objection. The utmost they have said of it is, not that immersion is an inaccurate translation, but that pædobaptists do not like it. On the contrary, its fidelity is tacitly admitted; for, if not, why is not its unfaithfulness exposed, and the whole dispute terminated at once?

Is the rendering then a novelty? Have the Baptists forsaken ancient and trustworthy guides, and introduced an innovation? Let this question be determined when the following facts have been considered. Of all existing versions of the New Testament the Peshito Syriac is the oldest. "Michaelis pronounces it to be the very best translation of the Greek Testament which he ever read, for the general

ease, elegance, and fidelity with which it has been executed. It is confessedly of the highest antiquity, and there is every reason to believe that it was made, if not in the first century, at least in the beginning of the second.”* Michaelis, after Father Simon,† shows also that it was made immediately from the original.‡ In this version the words in question are uniformly rendered as the Baptists translate them. Next in point of antiquity come the Coptic and Ethiopic versions, referred to the third or fourth centuries;§ about the middle of the fourth we have also the Gothic of Ulphilas.|| These all translate the words in the same way, and so also does the ancient Arabic. Among modern versions which translate by immersion are the Arabic of the Propaganda, of Sabat, and others in the same language, the German of Luther, the Dutch, the Danish, and the Swedish. Some modern versions render the terms by washing or ablution. This is done in the Persian of Martyn; but he sometimes employs a phrase which can only mean ablution by dipping. The only other mode that has been adopted is that of retaining the Greek word. If, therefore, it be wrong to translate these words as the Baptist missionaries have done, it is at least a very ancient and a very general offence among translators. So far are they from standing alone, that, to use the words of the late lamented and learned Superintendent of the editorial department of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in his masterly defence of the Serampore Mahratta version, ¶ “it may be safely affirmed, that

* Horne, vol. ii. p. 208.

† Critical History, vol. ii. p. 119.

‡ Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii. c. vii. sec. iv.

§ Ibid. c. xiii. and xvii.

|| Ibid. vol. ii. c. vii. sec. xxxi.

¶ See Appendix B.

many of the most accurate and valuable versions, both ancient and modern, are involved in the same accusation; and that there is not one which is directly hostile to it." Let it now therefore be determined who are the innovators, the Baptists, who translate these words, or those who would keep them untranslated.

The Vulgate, it is true, and such of the Western versions as in this respect have been framed upon its model, among which is our authorized English version, retain the Greek terms. But, though they thus forsake the track of the Oriental versions, it is not, as is well known, because the translators understood the terms in another sense. To say nothing of continental scholars, whether Romanists or Protestants, the fathers of the Anglican church, Wicliff, Tyndale, Cranmer, and others, speak plainly on the subject, and so to this day does the Book of Common Prayer. But these were consecrated words; and superstition, church authority, and the command of a pedantic king, combined to hold them in their places, notwithstanding the manifest absurdity and criminality of thus muffling up the ordinance of Christ, till its fair but dishonoured countenance is no longer known. And will the Bible Society lend itself to this truth-suppressing practice? Will they not only sanction it, but resolve to sanction nothing else? Implicitly condemning the best and most ancient versions, and discountenancing those which, like them, speak, as the original Scriptures speak, in plain and intelligible terms, will they put a premium upon such as study to be obscure? The Memorialists would ask, in the pertinent language of Dr. Campbell, "Does that deserve to be called a version, which conveys neither the matter nor the manner of

the author? Not the matter, because an unintelligible word conveys no meaning; not the manner, because what the author said simply and familiarly, the translator says scholastically and pedantically. And if former translators have from superstition, from fear of giving offence, or from any other motive been induced to adopt so absurd a method, shall we think ourselves obliged to imitate them? If (the church) herself has been any how induced to adopt a style that is not well calculated for conveying the mind of the Lord, nay, which in many things darkens, and in some misrepresents it, shall we make less account of communicating clearly the truths revealed by the Spirit, than of perpetuating a phraseology which contributes to the advancement of ignorance, and of an implicit deference in spiritual matters to human authority?" "On the contrary, (with him they would go on to affirm) if the church has in process of time contracted somewhat of a Babylonish dialect, and thereby lost a great deal of her primitive simplicity, purity, and plainness of manner, her language cannot be too soon cleared of the unnatural mixture, and we cannot too soon restore her native idiom. To act thus is so far from being imputable to the love of novelty, that it results from that veneration of antiquity which leads men to ask for the old paths, and makes the votaries of the true religion desirous to return to the undisguised sentiments, manner, and style of holy writ, which are evidently more ancient than the oldest of these canonized corruptions."*

As it is no innovation of the Baptist Missionaries to translate these words, so neither is it a novel thing for

* Dissertation xi.

the Bible Society to circulate versions in which they are so translated. The Society has done this from the time it commenced the foreign distribution of the Scriptures, it has done it in every quarter of the globe, and it does it at the present time. The resolution of the Committee therefore comes too late, to derive any sanction from usage. It would have formed an intelligible reason, at least, whatever might have been thought of its value, if they could have said, "We have never given aid to such versions, and cannot now begin." But they have no such plea. To say nothing of the various versions, both oriental and western, already mentioned, it appears from the last Report,* that the Bible Society has assisted in circulating upwards of 440,000 copies of the Scriptures in India alone—240,000 issued by the Calcutta Auxiliary, and 200,000 by the missionaries of Serampore; now as these versions were principally made by Baptists, the vast majority of the copies contain the words in a translated form. They cannot therefore even say that it is a new thing in Bengal.

The Memorialists have however heard it replied that it was done in ignorance. How far this is borne out by facts the following statement will show. So far back as the year 1813, there is a letter from the Rev. A. Fuller, Secretary to the Baptist Mission, to the Rev. J. Hughes, in which the writer says, "In a letter which I lately received from Dr. Carey, he mentions having received one from you, inquiring in what way certain words were rendered in their translations. He wished me to inform you that they had rendered βαπτίζω by a word that signifies to *immerse*, and ἐπίσκο-

* Appendix, p. 40.

προς, by a word that signifies an overseer." Mr. Hughes replied, "I thank you for the information respecting Dr. Carey. The rendering which concerns baptism I might deem it proper to exchange for the undefined one adopted in our version, especially considering the circumstances under which oriental versions are proceeding. This, however, is submitted with deference, as an opinion from which I am sensible wiser and better men decisively differ."* Here then is evidence that, twenty-six years ago, one of the secretaries of the Bible Society was in correspondence on the subject, both with the Serampore translators, and with the principal officer of that Society by which they were sent out. Is it to be supposed, even though [this were an unofficial correspondence, that it was profoundly kept in the breast of Mr. Hughes? Did he never mention it to either of his colleagues? Or, even beyond these individuals, was it never talked of among the members of the Committee, especially such as took a lead? If there were this total silence in doors on the subject, it is certain there was none out. This very correspondence was, as is remembered, the topic of free conversation in other circles; and even of debate at least at one, if not at more associations of ministers and churches. It must be well known to those who have any experience in public societies, how often it happens that their functionaries or committee-men undertake, and are even desired, to make inquiries in an unofficial manner, which are nevertheless intended for the information of their conductors. But besides this, it will be seen by a reference to the early proceedings of the Bible Society, that the Baptist Mis-

* Baptist Magazine, 1838, p. 65.

sionaries were from the first in habitual confidential communication with the Rev. D. Brown, and the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, through whom, until an Auxiliary Committee was organized in Calcutta, the correspondence with the Bible Society relating to their versions was principally conducted. That organization took place in 1809;* and they were then officially associated with other gentlemen, and with the Parent Committee itself. Through this medium the missionaries received in the same year the first grant paid to them by the Bible Society, amounting to £1000. From their coadjutors with whom by office they were now connected, it is not pretended that there was any concealment, as from Mr. Brown and Dr. Buchanan there had been none; and they must have had opportunity enough to have possessed themselves of the secret, if there had. The versions, moreover, as soon as published, were open to the inspection of all the world, and criticisms upon them were invited by public advertisement.† Very possible, indeed, it is, that the gentlemen composing the Committee when the grants were suspended were not acquainted with the facts of the case. It is possible, also, that those gentlemen might not know that so many other versions, to which they were giving, and to which their successors still continue to give their countenance, translate the words in the same obnoxious way, until it was brought before them by the present controversy. The Committee of the Bible Society, however, is elected every year; and it is not to be concluded, because the individuals com-

* Owen Hist. British and Foreign Bible Society, vol. i. 99, 277, 288; vol. ii. p. 14.

† Owen vol. iii. p. 466.

posing it in 1833 may have been ignorant of a particular fact, that it was therefore unknown to their predecessors in office twenty years before. But what entirely destroys the little remaining force which this plea of ignorance may yet perhaps be thought to retain, is the circumstance that, after the Committee were informed of the fact, they were still willing to exhibit their accustomed aid. For when application was first made to them for help in printing this Bengali Version, though they had received a letter some time before from three Pædobaptist Missionaries in Calcutta, requesting them on the very ground of these words being translated to withhold their grants from the Baptists, the Secretary of the Bible Society wrote to the Auxiliary in that city, stating that, if the Version were a good one, it was the wish of the Committee to afford assistance.*

The Memorialists would in this place add, that since the circulation of immersionist versions has been the practice of the Society from its first foreign operations up to the present time, and is its practice still; since this practice was commenced by the founders of the Institution, who framed its constitution, and enacted its laws; and since the first and only deviation from it is that which gives occasion to the present complaint; that deviation cannot have been made to vindicate its violated constitution, but is itself a violation of it.

But if neither of the preceding reasons can justify the Committee, there is yet another which may perhaps serve the purpose. The Baptist versions are "sectarian;" they uphold a party instead of subserving the general cause of christian truth; the tincture of bigotry poisons their catholicity, and renders them un-

* Letter of Baptist Missionary, May 25, 1832. Appendix A.

deserving of the common support. If they are open to this charge, the Memorialists themselves say, let them perish; the church and the world cannot be too soon freed from every trace of their existence. But, only asking how fidelity to the original can consist with sectarianism, unless the New Testament itself be sectarian, they are content to leave the defence of their translators in the hands of that late eminently gifted servant of the Bible Society, to whom they have before referred. "Bigotry," (says Mr. Greenfield) "that is, blind zeal and prejudice, they cannot justly be accused of, while they have the primitive sense of the term, and the rendering of so many ancient and modern translations, as the foundation upon which they have grounded their version; nor can they consistently be charged with sectarianism, while they are found in company with the churches of Syria, Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and others, together with the Church of England itself. If they be bigots, I know not what name the advocates for pouring or sprinkling, who have no such basis to rest on, merit; and if theirs be a sect, it must be confessed to be a very ancient, and a very extensive one."

"But there is another point of view," he continues, (and while he writes these memorable words, he says, as a preface to them, 'I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I am neither a Baptist, nor the son of a Baptist') "there is another point of view in which the opponents of the Serampore Missionaries should consider the subject; and one which involves the most important consequences. Before they arraign the British and Foreign Bible Society as guilty of a gross and unpardonable dereliction of duty in aiding the

Serampore translators, and prefer a recommendation for them to withdraw that aid, they should be fully prepared to carry their censure, as well as their recommendation, to a much greater extent. In consistency, if that aid be withdrawn from the Serampore Missionaries because they have rendered βαπτίζω to *immerse*, then must it also be withdrawn from the churches of Syria, of Arabia, of Abyssinia, of Egypt, of Germany, of Holland, of Denmark, &c.; and the venerable Peshito-Syriac Version, the Arabic Versions of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c.; the Ethiopic, the Coptic, and other Versions must all be suppressed. If, however, they are not thus prepared to carry their recommendation to its fullest extent, then must they close their mouths for ever against their Baptist brethren. But should a faction so far prevail over the good sense of the Committee, and the sound and catholic principles upon which the Society is founded, and which have ever been its boast and glory, as well as the most powerful means of its extraordinary success, then its 'honour will be laid in the dust;' and from a splendid temple, in the service of which the whole Christian world could cordially unite, it will dwindle into a contemptible edifice, dedicated to party feelings, motives, and views. The broad basis upon which it is founded is its strength and security; contract this within narrower limits, and it falls into ruins."*

Such, in its general merits, is the case of the Baptist versions; and on the grounds thus laid the Memorialists, with great respect, renew their application for aid. They are induced to this measure principally by two

* Appendix E.

considerations ;—first, because they know that in some quarters among their Pædobaptist friends their claim on the Bible Society is acknowledged to be just ; while the Committee, in their last Annual Report, concede, when vindicating their own conduct in reference to certain other versions, all that the Memorialists plead for in relation to their own : and next, because they are most unwilling to proceed in any steps of separate organization for raising funds to print and circulate them, until the Committee shall have told them again, if indeed they will tell them so, that the Bible Society determines to cast them off.

It will be in the recollection of the Committee, that the Baptist Missionary Society applied for aid towards the Bengali version first in the autumn of 1832,* and again in February, 1836.† The second application, however, was not a repetition of the first ; it differed materially in its character. Though the Baptist body felt deeply aggrieved that, for the first time in the history of the Bible Society, its Committee had frowned upon the efforts of their missionaries in the field of Bible translation, where they had acquired so just a celebrity, they still loved the Institution ; and for the sake of preserving the harmonious co-operation in which, through so many years, they had been joint labourers in giving to the millions of India the word of life, they were willing to accept a grant simply for the use of their own churches. Instead, therefore, of standing upon the ancient ground of asking that they might be enabled to put the version into general circulation, they requested only “a small supply” for themselves ; and this they conceived might have been the

* Appendix A.

† Appendix B.

more readily complied with, as their missionaries were about to print a large edition for the general purposes of the Bible Society, with the words relating to baptism altered. This second application, however, shared the fate of the first.

It may not be improper to mention, that this application was preceded, at the instance of the Committee of the Baptist Mission, by a personal conference between the noble President of the Bible Society, attended by its principal officers, and a deputation from them; so desirous were they of leaving no method untried by which they could hope to preserve the friendly understanding that had always hitherto subsisted between the two institutions.

Again repulsed, it became a matter of anxious deliberation whether now the Baptist body ought not to take immediate steps to originate that support which the Bible Society denied. But they yielded to mild counsels. Reluctant to the last degree to resort to a course which should separate them in any measure from the Bible Society, they resolved to make another effort to bring things back into their old channel. A document was accordingly prepared, setting forth in the form of a protest* the principal reasons sustaining their cause; and, having received the signatures of considerably more than 500 of their ministers, it was presented to the Committee in March of the following year. But this also failed. At this stage of the business, the whole case was reviewed and argued from the press by one of their ministers, standing deservedly high in the esteem of his brethren, in a letter to Lord Bexley; but though this pamphlet was extensively

* Appendix C.

circulated, remains unanswered, and is known to have had considerable influence upon individual minds, it has effected no change in the Committee. And thus the matter at present stands.

This brief recapitulation of circumstances the Memorialists conceive, must show that the Baptist body has not been hasty to redress its wrongs; that it has evinced a scrupulous and tender regard to the character of the Bible Society, using all proper means to prevent a rupture, and to induce the Committee to retrace their steps; and that, if, making still one pacific movement more, it should unhappily be foiled in that, there remains no other course for it to adopt than, trusting in God, and seeking aid wherever it may be found, to enter upon that department of Scripture distribution from which, amidst its deepest regrets, the Bible Society retires.

This final overture for a restoration of concord is now made. The Memorialists have the means of knowing that, in the document they now place before the Committee, they represent the sentiments of their denomination throughout the United Kingdom. Once more, therefore, they entreat the Committee to rectify the cause of their complaint, and not to force from the bosom of the Bible Society a whole denomination of Christians who were amongst its earliest and most useful friends. They confess themselves not without hope of a favourable issue, from certain indications of altered views which have much cheered their minds. To individuals it would not be decorous more explicitly to refer; leaving, therefore, those highly-respected ministers not of their body, who nevertheless coincide with them in opinion as to the duty of the

Society, to use their influence in whatever manner they may prefer, the Memorialists would call the attention of the Committee to their own language in the conclusion of their last Report.

In that Report the Committee enter upon the vindication of their conduct, in answer to the charge of another society, in circulating certain versions on the continent of Europe which are alleged not to be "genuine versions of the Word of God." In the course of their exculpatory observations, the following passages occur :—

"They would begin (they say) with remarking that they have always been aware that these versions are justly open to much exception."

"They would also beg to state that, taking the calmest view of all the passages objected to, they do not find that any thing essential is involved."

"They are aware of their many and serious defects; but they are not ashamed to confess, that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones, is such that they are compelled to shrink from it. They bid God speed to all who may make attempts of this kind, and shall rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed; but they know that success must be a work of time; and, in the meanwhile, they feel themselves justified in using imperfect versions—versions which bear many marks of the infirmities, not always excusable, of the translators."

"Your Committee now turn to the real question which the Society has to consider—Does the amount of erroneous translation, or of even corrupt translation, to use the stronger term, justify the condemnation and consequent abandonment of the versions referred to, as

unworthy to be called the Word of God? Your Committee think a satisfactory conclusion in the negative may be arrived at, by the following considerations:”—

The Memorialists quote the first.

“No version is perfect—no version is to be found but what contains acknowledged error, and, in a great many instances, error that might be corrected. Your Committee are persuaded that if even the English authorized version were dealt with in the same manner as the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslations might be presented, which would, with equal justice,* give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the Word of God? Errors are to be found in it, which the humblest scholar could not only point out, but correct. Errors, too, there are which obscure the sense, in some important instances.”

In still further vindication of themselves, they add that, “In giving such versions to the people in their respective countries, it has been regarded as a duty to give them *as they are*, and not to attempt to alter and improve them. They have been given, with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title page: and your Committee have ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people, ‘This is the book known and recognized by your own church.’”

“Great as may be the variations between the English and the Portuguese, or any other version cir-

* “The Committee are surprised to find that this expression has been misapprehended. “With equal justice”—that is, if justly in one case, justly also in the other. According to the view taken by the Committee, they might have said, “With equal injustice;” and that this was their meaning sufficiently appears from the sentence which occurs towards the conclusion of this paragraph.”

culated by the Society, they all teach substantially one and the same truth:—they set forth the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. They all proclaim who and what the Saviour is,—his proper Deity—his one great sacrifice for sin—his intercession with the Father—his coming again to judgment—man’s guilt, condemnation, and helplessness—the Holy Spirit’s grace, power, and work. They are all, your Committee solemnly believe, able to save the souls of men; ‘to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.’ They all say, ‘Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.’”

And they ask, “Are there not individuals in considerable numbers—are there not congregations to which the Society might point, and with reference to which they might, accommodating the words of the apostle, say, ‘Ye are the seal of our apostleship?’ Are there not, in other words, many now ‘the children of light,’ and walking as such, who gratefully acknowledge that *they owe their all* to some of these very condemned versions?—who confess that the light which they have, beamed upon them from these very pages?—who, now rejoicing in the Lord as their Righteousness, have learned the sacred truth from these translations?”

And they conclude in a paragraph which commences with the following sentence:

“Your Committee have thus simply stated the principle upon which, with regard to their versions, they have acted in years that are past; together with the reasons which seem to justify their adherence to that principle in years to come.”

On these passages the Memorialists beg to submit to the consideration of the Committee the following remarks.

These European versions, it is said, the Committee have always known to be “justly open to much exception,” and “they are aware of their many and serious defects.” Still they circulate them, and circulate them not with hesitation, as though it were a thing of doubtful propriety; but they say, “they feel themselves justified in using imperfect versions—versions which bear many marks of the infirmities, not always excusable, of the translators.”

Let it then be conceded that the Bengali and other Baptist versions are “imperfect versions”—imperfect, that is, of course, not in general execution; for it was never pretended they were exempt from the characteristic of all human performances—but imperfect in the rendering of the particular words; let it even be conceded that in this rendering they betray the inexcusable infirmities of the translators; still, by the Committee’s own showing, they ought not on this account to have been rejected. When this charge is brought against the Portuguese version, the Committee say, “We know it is a just charge, but we shall continue to circulate notwithstanding.” When it is brought against the Baptist versions, the Committee say, “Whether it be a just charge or not we give no opinion, but we shall withdraw our support.” Is this treatment of the different versions equal? Is it right?

But perhaps the reasons by which the Committee vindicate themselves in the case of the European versions are such as justify the distinction. What then are they? As the Memorialists gather them from the Report, they are the following:

1. "Taking the calmest view of all the passages objected to, the Committee do not find that any thing essential is involved." These passages no doubt might have suppressed fundamental truth, or have inculcated fatal error. It appears they do neither; for thus it is imagined the Committee must mean their words to be understood when they say, "they do not find that any thing essential is involved;" and they consequently deem them worthy of support. But will the Committee show what fundamental truth is suppressed, or what fatal error is inculcated, when βαπτίζω is translated to immerse? Baptists are accused of attaching an undue importance to their mode of administering the Christian rite; but where will the accusation lie now? Though they have the concurrent testimony of antiquity, of versions, and of criticism on their side, they never insisted upon immersion as a fundamental truth; but the Committee of the Bible Society do what is equivalent to this—they proscribe it as though it were a fatal error.

2. The next reason assigned by the Committee is, that, as they can neither make versions nor revise them, they thankfully avail themselves of the labours of those who can, even though much imperfection may blend with them. "They are not ashamed to confess (they tell us) that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones, is such that they are compelled to shrink from it. They bid God speed to all who may make attempts of this kind, and will rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed."

Attempts of this kind the Baptist missionaries have made, with what success the former records of the Bible Society sufficiently declare.

It might well be deemed superfluous to eulogize the biblical labours of Dr. Carey and his colleagues. Their reputation in this important department of Christian philanthropy is too well founded, and too universally acknowledged by learned men of all communities, to be called in question now. Of the competency of Dr. Yates and the brethren associated with him to succeed to the work of translation, the testimonies to the Bengali version already laid before the public, and its acknowledged superiority to all preceding versions in that language, are ample proof. Why then, since the Committee affirm that they bid God speed to all who make attempts of this kind, and rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed, do they not "bid God speed" to them? Why, instead of bidding them God speed, do they weaken their hands, and use the influence of that great confederation of Christian communities to discredit their versions? Again the Memorialists have to ask if this is worthy of the Bible Society? if it is just? if it is in harmony with the professions of the Committee?

3. The Committee inquire, as a third reason, "Does the amount of erroneous translation, or even of corrupt translation, to use the stronger term, justify the condemnation and consequent abandonment of the versions referred to as unworthy to be called the word of God;" and they "think a satisfactory conclusion in the negative may be arrived at." Among the considerations by the help of which they arrive at this conclusion, is the fact, that "no version is perfect;" and "that if even the English authorized version were dealt with in the same manner as the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslation might be presented, which would with equal justice (or, as they say in a note, with equal

injustice) give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the word of God?"

Here then are versions, of which it is alleged that there is in them "an amount of corrupt translation," or, to take the milder term of "erroneous translation," which gives rise to the question if they can be considered the word of God. The inference drawn from the errors they contain, and insinuated in the question, is indeed denied, but the fact of the existence of these errors or corruptions is admitted. If the Committee of the Bible Society will patronize these versions with their admitted amount of corrupt translation, or of erroneous translation, *a fortiori*, they ought to patronize another version, against which no corruption at all, and even no error is alleged; for its rejection has never been grounded on the charge of corrupt translation, or even of erroneous translation, but only on a translation which pædobaptists disapprove. "If the English authorized version," moreover, it is said, "were dealt with in the same manner as the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslation might be presented, which would with equal injustice give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the word of God?" What injustice then would be done it, if it were dealt with in the same manner as the Bengali? That version is condemned as unworthy of the Bible Society's support. Not simply is it interrogatively insinuated that such a version cannot be the word of God, it is practically treated as though it were not. With all the mistranslations of the English version, and all the erroneous or corrupt translations of the Portuguese version, they are circulated; but with no alleged mistranslation, no corrupt translation, or even erroneous translation, the Bengali version is abandoned. Again

the Memorialists must ask if this is a consistent proceeding?

4. In the fourth place, the Committee say, that “in giving such versions to the people in their respective countries, it has been regarded as a duty to give them as they are, and not to attempt to alter and improve them. They have been given, with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title-page; and your Committee have ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people—‘This is the book known and recognized by your own church.’”

In this remarkable passage, remarkable for its pertinency to the case in hand, there are at least three distinct admissions, each of which concludes against the decision of the Committee.

1. In the first place, they say they regard it as a duty not to attempt to alter and improve versions, but to give them as they are. Had the Committee forgotten when they penned this sentence, what they did to the 5000 copies of the Bengali version, or did they in that instance intentionally violate their regard to duty? The Memorialists are loath to impute the latter; they think that upright men would not wilfully do wrong. But if it were forgetfulness of duty, and not intentional violation of it, the Committee will immediately set themselves right.

2. Versions “are given with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title-page.” In other words, the Committee do not take upon them the responsibility of translations, but leave that to be borne by the translator. As it is no duty of theirs to attempt to alter and improve what he may have done, so his name on the title-page tells all the

world that the Committee have left the translation untouched. And what besides this have the Baptists ever asked? "Give our versions (we respectfully say) for what they are." We have never desired to shift the responsibility, our whole complaint is that we are not suffered to take it.

3. The "Committee has ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people—This is the book known and recognized by your own church." The Memorialists are again compelled to recal to the remembrance of the Committee circumstances which they must have forgotten. Not "ever" have they done this. In one instance, at least, it was thought of no importance. The Baptists were content to have taken "a small supply" for the use of their own people; and they would have said to them, as they presented the New Testament in the capacity of the Committee's distributors—"The Bible Society gives you this as the book known and recognized by your own church." But the boon was denied. The Committee, in effect, have said, the Roman Church shall have their version in Portugal, the Episcopalian in England, the Lutheran in Germany, the Pædobaptists in China; but the Baptists shall not have theirs. If the Bible Society can accomplish it, not only shall immersion as a mode of baptism, be banished from every other church in India, it shall be suppressed in the Baptist itself. Again, the Memorialists put the question, Is this generous treatment? Is it worthy of an Institution which is meant to comprehend all churches, and to exclude none?

4. The fourth reason by which the Committee defend their support of Roman Catholic Versions is, that, great as may be the variations between them and

the English Version, “ they all teach substantially one and the same truth. They set forth (the Committee say) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. They all proclaim who, and what the Saviour is, his proper Deity, his one great sacrifice for sin, his intercession with the Father, his coming again to judgment ; man’s guilt, condemnation, and helplessness ; the Holy Spirit’s grace, power, and work. They are all, your Committee solemnly believe, able to save the souls of men ; ‘ to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.’ ‘ They all say, ‘ Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life ; and they are they which testify of me.’ ”

It were needless to spend five words in showing that this reason is alike applicable to the Baptist Versions.

5. The past usefulness of the European versions is assigned as the last reason for their retention. But whatever weight there may be in this argument, it pleads at least with equal, if not with superior force, for the Versions of the Baptists. With what propriety might it not be inquired, in the very language of the Committee, “ Are there not individuals in considerable numbers, are there not congregations, to which the Society might point, and with reference to which they might, accommodating the words of the apostle, say, ‘ Ye are the seal of our Apostleship ?’ Are there not, in other words, many, now ‘ the children of light,’ and walking as such, who gratefully acknowledge that *they owe their all* to some of those very condemned versions ? who confess that the light which they have, beamed upon them from these very pages ? who, now rejoicing in the Lord as their righteousness, have learned the sacred truth from these translations ?” Who more ap-

propriately shall be called the apostle of Bengal than William Carey? By whom have Christian churches been planted in British India, if not by Baptist missionaries? And by whose labours were the missionaries throughout that vast territory of every denomination provided with the Scriptures, but by Baptist translators? By "these very condemned versions" how many heathens have been led to renounce their "abominable idolatries?" How many triumphs have been achieved over the Shasters and the Koran? How many of the most abject and down-trodden vassals of Satan have been lifted up to a communion with Infinite purity and love? How many voices once frantic with the yells of demons, are now attuned to "the song of Moses and the Lamb?" If past usefulness shall be a plea with the Committee, let them think of the moral change which has taken place, and is still in progress, over the whole extent of our Indian Empire; let them think of caste broken, suttee extinguished, native schools opened, female education instituted, Christian churches formed, benevolent institutions founded, opposition silenced, and Governments themselves enlisted on the Bible's side; let them think of the thousands of converts to the Christian faith, of the hundreds of native agents variously employed in its propagation; of Krishna, Rammohun, Sébukram, Ramprasad, Aratoon, Soojatullee, and numbers more, Hindoos or Mussulmans once, becoming preachers of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God;" let them listen to the recital of facts such as every missionary can tell them coming from the plains of Hindostan, to the alarmed apprehensions of Brahmins of the downfall of their ancient mythology, and to the glowing hopes of Christians of the approaching universal triumph of Christianity;

and let them remember, that, so far as these effects are to be attributed to the Scriptures at all, they are to be mainly attributed to these condemned and abandoned versions of the Scriptures, for there were no other; and then let them consider, if the plea of usefulness is to prevail, whether these circumstances do not establish an irresistible argument for their re-instatement in the patronage of the Bible Society.

In conclusion, the Committee tell the public that they have thus "stated the principle upon which, with regard to their versions, they have acted in years that are past, together with the reasons which seem to justify their adherence to that principle in years to come."

To the uniformity, however, with which they have acted upon this principle, their conduct towards the Baptists forms an exception. The Memorialists believe, and they rejoice to believe, that it is the solitary exception. They sincerely hope that no other faithful versions of the Scriptures have been treated as theirs have been, or ever will be. It may be enough for any body of Christians to have taken a resolution only in one instance, which, however unintentionally on their part, will not let God speak the whole revelation of his will in a language that can be understood. The Memorialists are aware that this is putting the case plainly and solemnly. Solemnly they wish to put it, and with plain-spoken truthfulness. They impute no evil motives, they believe none existed in the minds of the Committee; on the contrary, they are persuaded those excellent persons who passed the resolution acted under a conviction that they were doing what duty required at their hands. But that such conviction was founded in error, cannot, they conceive, be a

matter of doubt, now the consequences which their resolution involves are apparent. Looking at the subject, not in the light simply of a difference of opinion between Baptists and Pædobaptists, but in its whole extent of application to the great work of Bible translation, and at the consequences which must ensue, either as translators shall feel themselves bound to give the entire Scriptures without concealing any part, or at liberty to evade translation, or to translate on a principle of accommodation and compromise; the Memorialists must confess, that no language they can employ would adequately represent their views of its importance. They have accordingly desired to deal with it, not as a party question, but as a grave matter of Christian morals, in the decision of which the whole Church of Christ is concerned. As a party question by no fairness of representation can it be exhibited. With that volume before them which is their Heavenly Father's gift to the whole human family, and which they and the rest of the Christian Church hold in trust for all their brethren of mankind, mere party questions sink in their esteem into unutterable insignificance. They plead not for the advantage of their own denomination, but for common principles, in which there ought to be a concurrence amongst all denominations. They plead for the restoration of harmony, for a return to the ancient paths, the good old ways in which the Bible Society used to walk, and in which, towards all but themselves, its determination is declared to walk in future—in a word, they plead for the consistency and honour of the Bible Society itself.

Time was, when in concluding one of their Annual Reports,* the Committee could say,

“ Let it not be forgotten, that the basis of the Society is as ample as ever. There the various communions of Christians have enjoyed communion with each other. There, within the range of the United Kingdom, the Episcopalian has delighted to meet and encourage, and to be met and encouraged by, his brethren of other names. There they have mutually learned, that brethren they are, and there they indulge the hope that brethren they shall remain, and dwell together in unity. There they have mingled their sympathies with the brethren of the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches of the Continent. There they have witnessed with delight, the breathings of the pious Roman Catholic, and have hailed the approach of the Greek and Armenian, the Syrian, the Copt, and the Chaldee Christian. All, of every name, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, have gladly extended to each other the right hand of fellowship.”

But should the Committee in an evil hour turn a deaf ear to the pleadings of the Memorialists, the time they describe in these glowing terms is gone. One denomination of Christians who trust they may, nevertheless, humbly aver that they “ love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,” is expelled from the fraternal union ; or, if they still retain a place as contributors—which numbers of them will—and, if one or two of their body are continued on the Committee—as probably they may—their translations are discarded, their churches are aggrieved, and they no longer unite on terms of equality. Christians of every other name, and in their distinctive names, may still extend to each other the right hand of unbroken friendship ; but henceforth, though still extended, the right hand of a Baptist none may take.

APPENDIX.

A.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT INTO BENGALI, BY MESSRS. YATES AND PEARCE.

From the Calcutta Missionaries to the Committee of the Baptist Mission.

Calcutta, May 25, 1832.

Dear Brethren,

IN addressing you upon any subject connected with the spiritual and eternal interests of our fellow-men, we feel the weighty responsibility that rests both upon you and ourselves in the decisions we form, and the conduct we pursue; but on the present occasion, when the translation of the word of God, by which those interests are deeply affected, is the great question for consideration, we feel the anxiety arising from our united responsibilities raised to its highest pitch. From the efforts we have lately made in this department, you will be necessarily led to conclude that we cannot be indifferent to its results. We have pressed forward through many discouragements, and, through the mercy of our heavenly Father, have been permitted to witness so much success, as convinces us that we have not laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought.

When the Gospel of Matthew was through the press, we forwarded copies of it, as a specimen of a New Version, to individuals well acquainted with the Bengali language, requesting their remarks upon it; and the following are the sentiments which they expressed, and which, from the absence of all incentives to partiality,* we think may be regarded as unbiassed testimony:—

I. From Tariniechurn Mitr, late Head Moonshee, in the College of Fort William.

“I take the liberty to represent, that, on examining the new edition of the Gospel of Matthew in Bengali, I find the translation very elegant, all the words and sentences grammatical, and the explanation is very much plainer than what has been already published.”

* In order to secure this object, whenever we asked an opinion as to the comparative merits of the translations in question, we distinguished them by the letters A. B. and C. Dr. Carey's being marked A; Mr. Ellerton's B; and ours, C. We requested to be informed, if our version was idiomatic and intelligible.

II. From Shree Narayan, Pundit, Head Librarian in the College of Fort William.

“I cannot but admire the correctness and accuracy of your version of the Gospel of Matthew, and when I see such composition in the Bengali language, executed by foreigners, I am justly delighted, and consider you entitled to high commendation.” (Translated.)

III. From Bhubanee Churn, Pundit.

“The language of this Book is excellent, the idiom correct, the style easy, and such as will, I think, be well understood.” (Translated.)

IV. From Khetra Mohun Mookeryija, the Translator of Goldsmith's History of Greece and Rome.

“I have the pleasure to send you back the three works, A. B. and C., and beg to say, from the judgment I have been able to form, by a perusal of a few chapters of each, that C* among them has been the best executed, its style being more idiomatical and intelligible, and more suited to please the native literary public than those of the other two.”†

V. From Baboo Russomoy Dutt, a Member of the Calcutta School Society Committee.

“I think that the translation is both intelligible and idiomatic, and a far better one than any I have seen before of the kind.”

VI. From Gopal, Pundit, Dr. Carey's Assistant in many of his translations.

“The language of the Gospel you have sent me is excellent, and will be well understood by the people of this country.” (Translated.)

VII. From Baboo Kossynath Paul, Merchant, of Calcutta.

“I have attentively perused almost the whole of the work, and, on a careful revision, I find that the words therein have been well chosen. The style also, in my opinion, is of such a nature as to be intelligible to the middle class of my countrymen.”

VIII. From Baboo Oomanundun Thakoor, a Member of the School and School Book Society's Committee.

“I think the translation will in its nature be both intelligible and acceptable to our countrymen.”

IX. From Baboo Prusuna Coomar Thakoor, an intimate Friend and Associate of Baboo Ram Mohun Roy, and a Manager of the Hindoo College.

“Considering the difficulty arising from the great disparity in the idioms of the two languages, the translation in question appears to me deserving of high commendation as regards its literary execution.”

X. From Baboo Kasi Prusad Ghose, a young Gentleman of fortune, educated at the Hindoo College, and Author of a Volume of English Poems.

* The translation of the C. B. Missionaries. † Dr. Carey's and Mr. Ellerton's.

OPINION ON THE GENERAL MERITS OF THE TRANSLATION.

“I have given the work *two* attentive perusals, and have the pleasure to find it the best of any Biblical translation that I have hitherto seen in point of intelligibility.”

OPINION ON ITS MERITS, IN COMPARISON WITH PRECEDING TRANSLATIONS.

“My opinion is, that the translation marked C, on which I have already offered you my remarks, is a great improvement upon the two former, and that you have been more successful than your predecessors were in getting ‘accuracy of rendering from the original Greek, combined with propriety of idiom, and perspicuity and neatness in Bengali,’ an object, which you, and no doubt they also, had in view. In the two versions marked A. and B., I have met with more foreign and vulgar words, such as $\sqrt{\text{৩}} \text{৩}$ (lame) খাট (imprisonment) আমর (repair) বস (way) কয় (who^r) কিছু (less) &c., and with a greater want of idiom, than in the present translation of Matthew.”

XI. From the Rev. J. D. Pearson, Missionary of the London Society.

“In reference to the copy of the new version of the Gospel by Matthew, forwarded to me by Mr. W. H. Pearce, I have to say, that I placed it, and a copy of the Serampore version, and one of Mr. Ellerton’s, in the hands of one intelligent native, who is acquainted with the English New Testament, and without saying anything as to the Authors of the three versions, requested that he, with two other Pundits, would give me an opinion as to their comparative merits.

“The opinion given was, that your version is decidedly preferable to the other two. Here and there, he thought an expression probably might admit of improvement. At the same time, speaking of the construction generally, they considered it as very correct, and much in accordance with the Bengali idiom.”

Similar commendations we have received from other Missionary brethren of *every* denomination in the city.

After finishing the four Gospels, we sent copies of them to the Bible Society, by our friend Mr. Hill, the Independent Minister. He expressed to Mr. W. H. Pearce a wish to be allowed to state to the Committee, that we would permit them to use the version as their own, with the term “baptism” untranslated; and Mr. Pearce saw no objection to his doing so; it being understood, that we were at liberty to print any portion of the edition for which we paid, with the word translated. When it came under our united consideration, however, we concluded that we were not at liberty to go so far without your consent. We here insert the application, addressed by Mr. Dealtry, the Secretary of the Bible Society, to Mr. W. H. Pearce.

“I have great pleasure in being made the medium of conveying to

you the thanks of the Calcutta Auxiliary Committee of the Bible Society, for the grant of twelve copies of the four Gospels in Bengali, presented to them in the name of the Calcutta Baptist Missionaries, by the Rev. Mr. Hill, and more especially for the offer of the privilege of re-printing the edition, if this Committee required it, leaving it at the option of the Committee to make what alterations they might deem needful, as it respects the words on Baptism."

"A member of your body (Mr. G. Pearce), however, having expressed some doubt as it respected the accuracy of Mr. Hill's statement, the Committee would feel obliged if you would kindly say if Mr. Hill understood you to express the sentiments of the respectable body to which you belong, in your communication with him on the subject.

"I feel no doubt that the Committee would gladly avail themselves of the privilege, as the call for copies of the SS. in the Bengali language is at present so great. Your early answer would greatly oblige the Committee."

To this the following answer was returned by Mr. Pearce:—

"Accept my best thanks for your very obliging note, which I, this evening, laid before my associates, and was in return requested to communicate to you the following resolution:—

"That since the version of the Bengali New Testament, now executing by the Calcutta Baptist Missionaries, has been prepared and printed at the expense of funds remitted by the Baptist Missionary Society in England, the Missionaries think it their duty to communicate with that Society ere taking any steps with regard to the transfer of the version.

"The intended reference, they conceive, will not cause any eventual delay, as they would not like to enter on a second edition before the present one is completed. This will occupy, at least, twelve months, a time sufficient to allow the receipt of an answer from England.

"Should a second edition be printed for the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society, the delay, it is hoped, will be more than compensated by the advantages derived from the experience of those particularly engaged in the work, together with the further assistance received from other Missionaries."

From these notes you will at once perceive that the object of our present communication is to solicit from you advice respecting the course we are to pursue. To enable you to form a judgment, we shall put you in possession of all the information we can. Several circumstances have transpired which have either a direct or indirect bearing on this subject. Some years since, three of the Pædo-baptist brethren unknown to us, though on the most friendly terms with us, wrote to the Bible Society in England, requesting them not to give assistance to any Indian version in which the word "baptize" was translated to "immerse." None of these lived to see the reply to their application; and nothing further of a positive nature was done till last year. When you applied to the Bible Society in England for assistance to our version, the Secretary of the Parent Institution wrote to the Bible Society in Calcutta, stating, without any reference to the subject

of baptism, that if the version was considered a good one, it was their wish to afford assistance. The resolution they forwarded was as follows:—"That the above application respecting an edition of the Bengali New Testament be referred to the Committee of the Calcutta Auxiliary Society, with authority to contribute toward the expense of an edition, should they be of opinion that it ought to be encouraged by this Society." After seeing this resolution, we inquired privately whether they intended to give us aid, but could obtain no answer. A short time afterwards, in their Annual Report, they came forward and boldly declared their sentiments, intimating, too plainly to be misunderstood, that they should encourage no version of the Scriptures, how well soever it might be executed, in which the word *baptize* was rendered "to immerse." Speaking of Mr. Bruckner's version of the Javanese Scriptures, they say, "There is one delightful circumstance connected with this translation, which your Committee cannot omit to notice. The disputed words on baptism have been left, as in the English version, untranslated. Your Committee have the greater pleasure in noticing this, as they feel more than ever convinced of the indispensable necessity of adhering to their decision upon this subject, *in not sanctioning any version in which the words are made to signify 'immersion ;'* and most sorry indeed should they be to lose the services of men whose zeal, and talents, and piety, have been most justly the praise and admiration of all Christendom. They cannot but hope that the same course will be pursued in all their future translations."

Here the die is cast, and the weight which the Parent Society desired to remove from their own shoulders to that of the Auxiliary Society in Calcutta, must now be returned and placed where it was before. Should the Parent Society adopt the sentiments of the Auxiliary in Calcutta, it is for you to determine, whether they do not by that step exclude us as a denomination from their Institution. Should they think it most illiberal, as we do, then from the testimonials we now forward, they will certainly be willing to render us some pecuniary assistance.

But whatever may be their determination, the question still returns—What shall we do with the present application? Shall we give up our version, and submit to the alteration proposed, or not? We shall here state what we conceive the advantages and difficulties which attend this intricate question. Should we give up the version, it is the best thing we could do to make it popular and generally used. It would become the standard version of the Scriptures in the Bengali language, and as such would have a circulation which we alone could never command. While we recollect that the great object we have in view is to spread the knowledge of Christ to the utmost extent in our power, this appears to us a powerful motive. Another advantage that would arise from our consenting to the retaining of the original term on baptism is, we should please our brethren, and set a troublesome and disputed point at rest. It seems natural to inquire, whether we ought not to give up a non-essential

point for the sake of the peace of the Church, and of our brethren; and if we think ourselves strong on this point, whether we ought not to make a little sacrifice for those we deem weak. Is not this a concession on our parts which love demands?

While our own usefulness, and the happiness of our brethren plead powerfully for our compliance with the Committee's wishes, there are other considerations which very much neutralize these arguments. No prospects of usefulness, and no stretch of charity, can justify a dereliction of the truth. Nor have we any right to expect that those measures would tend to ultimate peace and usefulness which are adopted at the expense of truth. It seems to us questionable, whether when we know the true meaning of a word, and conceal it by non-translation, we do not come under the curse of those who "take away from the words of the prophecy of the book." This, while it applies with all its force to us, does not apply to those who conceive that the word cannot be properly rendered. Would the errors that now prevail in the world have come to such a pitch, if this word had been faithfully translated? And may not one version of the Scriptures, if generally approved, in which the word is faithfully translated, prevent much error in this vast empire, where Christianity is just beginning to spread? Are we not in this particular set for the defence of the truth? And however painful it may be to our feelings not to agree with others and yield to their wishes, yet is not this a sacrifice which truth requires?

This view of the case appears the more important, as the Committee of the Bible Society here, while they will sanction no version in which the word *baptize* is rendered "to immerse," have sanctioned some, and will probably sanction others, in which it is rendered any thing else; so that, unless we maintain our ground firmly, all the Indian versions of the Scriptures will be against us, either by retaining *βαπτίζω*, which the natives cannot understand, or by rendering it in such a manner as to lead them to believe that it never meant "to immerse."

Another consideration is, that if you, as a Society, intend to carry on versions of the Scriptures in which the disputed word is translated, it would be an injury to your usefulness for us to give up the version, as you would thenceforward have no ground of appeal to the public except in the light of sectarians. It would be said,—the Bible Society have printed your version, and why should you print it? Our answer must then be,—because we wish a certain disputed word to be translated. And this answer would be esteemed lighter than vanity, except by the Baptists. Viewing the subject in this light, we are led to conclude, that if you are resolved to support versions of your own, and solicit public contributions towards them, you will not choose to surrender this on the terms proposed; but if you are desirous of removing this burden from yourselves, as a clog to your Missionary operations not experienced by other societies, this will be a favourable opportunity of making a transfer of our version.

Having thus stated the question, together with what appear to us

the advantages and difficulties connected with it, we shall be happy to receive the decision of the Committee by the earliest opportunity.

We remain, Dear Brethren,

Yours, very faithfully and affectionately,

W. YATES,
 JAMES PENNEY,
 W. H. PEARCE,
 GEO. PEARCE,
 J. THOMAS,
 JNO. D. ELLIS.

P.S. As you may probably like to know the opinion on the subject entertained by our American Baptist brethren, we add it below. One of our members who had applied to the acting Secretary of the Calcutta Bible Society, for aid to the Burman translation of the New Testament, but had been informed that if the word βαπτισμῶ was translated, they could not afford it, communicated this decision to Messrs. Judson and Wade, when the former wrote as follows:—

“We are sorry that the Society is lending itself to aid a party, and taking ground which the increasing light of a few years will show to be untenable. The only fair and honourable course for them to pursue, is to afford impartial aid to all denominations of evangelical Christians, leaving the various translators to their own judgment and conscience.”

Since then the American Bible Society have liberally patronized their (the Burmese) translation, without any instructions whatever.

This letter was read at the Quarterly Committee Meeting, held October 24, 1832, when it was unanimously resolved,

That this Committee cannot sanction or recommend the mode of translation which has been proposed by the Auxiliary Bible Society in Calcutta, and that therefore application for pecuniary assistance be made to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society.*

Application was made accordingly, and the subject was discussed at various times in personal interviews with the Committee of the Bible Society. Some delay arose from an expectation on the part of that Committee, of further advices from Calcutta, which might assist them in forming their judgment, but at length the following Resolution was passed by that body on the 1st of July, 1833, confirmed on the 22nd of that month, and duly forwarded by the Secretary, the Rev. A. Brandram.

“That this Committee would cheerfully afford assistance to the Missionaries connected with the Baptist Missionary Society in their translation of the Bengali New Testament, provided the Greek terms relating to Baptism be rendered either according to the principle

* This resolution was formally approved by the open Committee, held 18th of June, 1833.

adopted by the translators of the authorised English version by a word derived from the original, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by the other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society."

This communication having been laid before the Mission Committee, July 24th, it was resolved to address to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society a statement of the reasons why this Committee deeply regret the decision they have adopted.

The subject was resumed at the next Quarterly Meeting, held 26th of September, when the following Resolution, and the reasons subjoined, were unanimously approved and adopted.

That this Committee cannot but express their deep regret at the passing of the above Resolution, since they conceive it involves principles which must operate injuriously on the great cause of Biblical translation throughout the world, and they beg respectfully to specify the following reasons for that opinion.

I.—Because they apprehend that the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society have acted wisely hitherto in abstaining from all dictation as to the particular words and phrases which shall be employed or rejected in the translations they patronize; and they conceive that if such a practice be once introduced, it will be very difficult to set bounds and limits to its operation.

II.—Because the Resolution evidently implies that the mode of translation adopted by our Missionaries is of a sectarian or denominational character, and such as would be used by Baptists alone, whereas, it is well known, that several of the most eminent Pædobaptists maintain that it is incumbent on translators to act as the Calcutta brethren have done, and substitute some equivalent vernacular terms for the Greek words in question.

III.—Because, to require translators of the Holy Scriptures, in the prosecution of their arduous task, not exclusively to aim at transferring the sense of the originals with all possible fidelity into the languages on which they are employed, but also to select "such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by the various denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society," is to impose a condition most uncertain and embarrassing in its nature, derogatory to mental independence, and which may obviously lead to the sacrifice of conscientious conviction on the altar of secular expediency.

IV.—Because this Committee feel, that to obscure the true import of the original by introducing the Greek words in Bengali letters, would be to fail in that strict fidelity which is the first duty of a translator.

No reason for such a procedure can be alleged from any want of precision in the original terms, for the meaning of which an appeal is confidently made to lexicographers, to the Septuagint, to the Hellenist Jewish writers, Josephus and Philo, and to profane Greek authors during a period of more than a thousand years, to say nothing of very numerous testimonies from eminent scholars in modern times, of our own and other countries, and of every variety of religious profession.

V.—Because, to adopt the words of the late very learned Mr. Greenfield, “Many of the most accurate and valuable versions both ancient and modern are involved in the same accusation, and there is not one which is decidedly hostile to the interpretation objected against.” To be consistent, therefore, if aid be refused on this ground, it must also be withdrawn from the churches of Syria, of Arabia, of Abyssinia, of Egypt, of Germany, of Holland, of Denmark, &c., and the venerable Peshito Syriac version (the oldest existing translation from the original Greek), the Arabic versions of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c., the Ethiopic, the Coptic, and other versions, must all be suppressed.

VI.—Because the rendering, on account of which our translation is denied pecuniary aid, was adopted by the Fathers of the Anglican Protestant Church, and the corresponding practice is expressly enjoined by her laws, and was, till comparatively a modern period, enforced by general observance within her pale, a departure from which practice has been deplored by some of her most eminent divines, as affording countenance to the flagrant abuses of the Romish Church.

VII.—Because, although in the western parts of Europe the example of the Vulgate has generally been followed in adopting the Greek word without translation, yet it could easily be shown that the translators clearly understood it in the sense given in the Bengali version.

VIII.—Because it is apprehended that an attempt to impose on the vast population of Bengal, some of whom can read the Greek Testament for themselves, a word foreign to their language, and to which they can attach no meaning, when the signification of the original has been long currently given in their own tongue, must not only fail of success, but tend to excite prejudices and suspicions militating against their reception of the Christian faith.

IX.—Because to impose such a condition on the present translators is an utter departure from the course which has been uniformly pursued by the Bible Society from its commencement. All the translations executed by Dr. Carey and others at Serampore were constructed on the same principle; they received for a long course of years grants of money from the Bible Society; and this Committee submit that, unless it can be proved that the rendering in question is erroneous or unfaithful, there can be no valid reason for discontinuing the practice.

X.—Because the necessary effect of such a Resolution must be to deprive all future translators, whose views harmonize with those of this Committee (and it is well known that hitherto the work of translation has been chiefly undertaken by such persons), of all hope of aid from the British and Foreign Bible Society; when, on the contrary, the necessities of the heathen world, and the difficulty of the task, require that every encouragement should be held out to well-qualified men of all religious communities to engage therein.

XI.—Because, finally, as members and supporters of the British

and Foreign Bible Society, and generally approving the conduct of its Committee, we have cordially rejoiced in the termination of former controversies in which it has been involved, and do most earnestly deprecate the adoption of a measure which may give rise to new discussions, tending to diminish the confidence and weaken the attachment of a large portion of the Christian community, who have ever ranked amongst its firmest adherents.

The above document having been transmitted to the Committee of the Bible Society, was acknowledged by their Secretary in the following letter.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,
Oct. 15, 1833.

Dear Sir,

The communication which you recently addressed to me, containing the views of the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, relative to their recent application for aid in printing an edition of the Bengali New Testament, was laid before the Committee of the Bible Society at their last meeting, on Monday, October 7, and I was directed on their behalf respectfully to acknowledge its receipt, and to express their unfeigned regret that a difference of opinion should exist upon the subject between you and themselves. Under the impression that further discussion was in no wise calculated to lessen that difference of opinion, the Committee did not proceed to a particular consideration of the various points advanced by the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, or to the preparation of specific replies to each particular.

Trusting that a kindly feeling may still be maintained between your Committee and ours, I remain,

Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

A. BRANDRAM, Secretary.

REV. J. DYER,

Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society.

B.

TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT INTO BENGALI,
BY THE REV. WILLIAM YATES, D.D.
Baptist Missionary Society.

IN the Appendix to our Report for 1834, various documents were inserted, relative to the above Translation, and the application for pecuniary aid towards its distribution, made to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Circumstances having led to renewed intercourse on the subject with that Committee, it is thought due to the friends of the Baptist Mission to make them acquainted with the steps which have been taken.

Early in the present year (1836) a letter was received by the Secretary from Mr. Yates, dated Calcutta, August 1, 1835, from which the following statement is extracted—

“A few months ago, an application was made to us to know whether we would allow the Bible Society to use our version, retaining the original word for baptism, and making a few other such alterations as a sub-Committee of Bengali scholars should recommend. We replied, that we would print one edition or any number of copies for them on these terms, as their wants were immediate, and they had no Testaments for distribution; but that we could not surrender our version to a sub-Committee to do what they pleased with it: that we would, till we heard from England, let them in their copies have the words baptism, &c., untranslated; and would alter any passage to agree with the English in which, through a regard to the original, we had deviated from it: but that beyond this we could not go; we could allow no alteration in the style unless it appeared to us an improvement.

“The same application was then made to Serampore, and the [Committee of the Auxiliary] Bible Society, having the refusal of each of the versions on these terms, appointed at one of their meetings a sub-Committee of six persons of all denominations here, except the Baptists, to take into consideration which was the best version, ours or Dr. Carey’s. While this sub-Committee were sitting, the Annual Meeting of the Society took place, and the General Committee having occasion to speak on the subject, thus expressed themselves in their Report:—

“The Committee have for some time been anxious to obtain as correct a version as possible of the New Testament in the Bengali language. They hope the object will ere long be attained. The Baptist Missionaries of Serampore, and those of Calcutta, with a liberality which does them honour, have permitted the Committee to consider themselves at liberty to use the version of the Scriptures, published at their respective presses, with such alterations as the Committee may deem needful in the disputed word for baptism. It must be added that, consistent with their views, the Baptist Missionaries are to be considered in no way parties to such alterations, nor is the version after such alterations to be regarded in any measure as their version. As both these versions are excellent in their kind, the one being considered, comparatively, more close to the original; the other, more elegant and idiomatic, but in consequence losing something of the closeness of a translation, a sub-Committee has been appointed to consider which, for the present, it may be desirable to take (as there is an urgent necessity for an immediate edition, there being no Testaments in the Depository), until the Committee have an opportunity to unite if possible the excellences of both.’

“The want of closeness here spoken of, is the non-retention of Hebrew and Greek idioms of speech. These idiomatical forms are often put in the margin in the English Bible, and this is the manner we propose to dispose of them when we begin to print the whole Bible.

“Some time after the Annual Meeting, the sub-Committee delivered in their Report, and on Tuesday last a full Committee was assembled to decide the important subject. The sub-Committee found some fault with both versions, but were unanimous in giving ours the preference. The Committee came to the resolution that 5000 copies of our version should be printed at the expense of the Parent Society. We shall now commence the printing of these, and at least 1000 copies for ourselves, with the word for baptism translated. When this is finished, we shall, if preserved, commence printing the Old Testament, whether we get assistance from the Bible Society or not; i. e. if it meets your approbation.”

About the same time that this letter from Calcutta reached the Committee, they received information from New York that the Committee of the American Bible Society had manifested a disposition to refuse grants to Scriptural Translations executed on the same principle as Mr. Yates's—a step which was likely to occasion a separation of the Baptist denomination throughout the United States, from that National Institution. Desirous to maintain harmony, if possible, both at home and abroad, among fellow-Christians engaged in the great and necessary work of circulating the word of God among all nations, the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, on January the 14th, appointed a deputation of their body, consisting of the Treasurer, Secretary, Joseph Gutteridge, Esq., Thomas Bickham, Esq., and the Rev. Eustace Carey, to wait upon Lord Bexley, the President of the British and Foreign Bible Society, to state their views on the subject. An interview accordingly took place, on February the 9th, at the Bible Society House, in Earl-street, between the said deputation, and Lord Bexley, the Secretaries, and some other gentlemen connected with the Committee of the Bible Society, at which the business was discussed at considerable length. It was intimated that the Committee would re-consider the matter, and in compliance with the kind invitation of the noble President, the following official application was subsequently forwarded:—

“To the Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

“Baptist Mission House, Fen-court, Feb. 12, 1836.

“Dear Sirs,

“I am instructed, by the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, to express their earnest hope, that as our friends at Calcutta have agreed to print for the Auxiliary Bible Society in that city an edition of 5000 copies of the Bengali New Testament, with certain specified alterations, your Committee will make us a grant for the purpose of furnishing our Missionaries with a small supply of the same version, as completed by Mr. Yates, for the use of the churches and congregations in connexion with our Society.

“I have also to renew my application for pecuniary aid to the new Translation of the Old Testament, now in progress by Mr. Yates, respecting which, I apprehend, the information considered

necessary by your Committee, when the application was previously made, has now been supplied.

“ I refrain from adverting to the several considerations which, in our judgment, might be urged in support of these applications, as they have lately been stated in another form.

“ I am, &c.,
“ JOHN DYER.”

(Signed)

The Assistant Foreign Secretary at Earl-street has officially communicated the following extract from the minutes of the British and Foreign Bible Society, as to the subsequent proceedings of the Committee of that Institution :—

At a Meeting of the General Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held at the Society's House, London, March 7, 1836, the Right Hon. LORD BEXLEY, Patron, in the Chair,

Read a letter from the Rev. J. Dyer, dated, Fen Court, Feb. 12, 1836, applying on behalf of the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, for a grant to enable them to furnish their Missionaries with a small supply of Bengali New Testaments, as completed by the Rev. Mr. Yates, and also for pecuniary aid to the new translation of the Bengalee Old Testament, now in progress by Mr. Yates.

Resolved,—That the above letter and application be referred to the sub-Committee for general purposes.

At a Meeting of the sub-Committee for general purposes, held at the House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London, March 11, 1836, J. RADLEY, Esq., in the Chair,

Read a letter from the Rev. J. Dyer, dated, Fen Court, Feb. 12, 1836, referred to this sub-Committee, when, after a long conversation, it was

Resolved,—That the further consideration of the subject be adjourned to a meeting of this sub-Committee, to be convened for Friday, the 18th instant, and that the Rev. J. Dyer be invited to attend on that occasion.

At a Meeting of the sub-Committee for general purposes, held at the House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London, March 18, 1836, P. J. HEISCH, Esq., in the Chair.

This sub-Committee having met by adjournment from the 11th instant, resumed their deliberations on the proposition contained in the Rev. J. Dyer's letter of Feb. 12, 1836, when, after a lengthened discussion, the Rev. J. Dyer being present, it was

Resolved,—That the further consideration of the subject be adjourned to Friday, the 25th instant; and that the Secretaries be desired to prepare, for the purpose of being laid before this sub-Committee, at their Meeting on that day, a draft of Resolutions founded on the above application, and also a letter, to be addressed to the Baptist Missionary Society, communicating the same.

At a Meeting of the sub-Committee for general purposes, held at the House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London, March 25, 1836, P. J. HEISCH, Esq., in the Chair,

This sub-Committee having resumed the consideration of the application of the Rev. J. Dyer, in his letter dated, Fen Court, Feb. 12, 1836, agreeably to Minute No. 2 of Meeting of this sub-Committee of the 18th instant,

The Rev. A. Brandram read the draft of the following Resolutions, submitting at the same time, that their adoption would render an explanatory letter to the Baptist Missionary Society unnecessary.

Resolved,—That it be recommended to the General Committee to decline complying with the request for aid, on the part of the Baptist Missionary Society, in printing a separate edition of the Bengali New Testament, in which the words for baptize, &c., are rendered by words signifying *immersion*.

Resolved,—That in giving such recommendation, this sub-Committee would express the sincere regret which they have experienced, in not being able to arrive at any other conclusion.

Resolved,—That while it is rarely expedient to assign reasons for the adoption of particular measures, the present instance may be regarded as an exception; a special request having been made by the Rev. J. Dyer, on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, to be furnished with a statement, embodying some of the arguments adduced in the course of the discussion; and that the following may be selected out of the various considerations on which the Resolution of this Committee is grounded; viz. :—

First, While this sub-Committee give full credit to the friends of the Baptist Missionary Society, that they are actuated by conscientious motives, in urging the duty of translating the original terms, and rendering them by terms signifying immersion, this sub-Committee are bound to give credit also to the motives of others, who no less conscientiously and uprightly believe, that the original terms in the Greek do not necessarily and always imply washing by *immersion*.

Secondly, That, inasmuch as this Society itself, and its Committees and sub-Committees, are composed of persons holding on this subject widely different opinions, and it is no part of the duty of the Committees or sub-Committees to adjust such differences of opinion, it seemed most desirable to fall back upon the practice resorted to in the English and other Versions.

Thirdly, That they feel more encouraged in recommending this course, inasmuch as the practice of not translating the word βαπτίζω leaves the matter without prejudice to any; while the adoption of a contrary course would, at least, wear the appearance of a disposition to favour

the views of one body of Christians, at the expense of those of others.

Fourthly, That in assigning these reasons, it is not meant to convey the idea, that each and all of them were felt alike by such members of this sub-Committee as united in the recommendation to decline the aid requested; some having been influenced by one consideration, and others by another.

Resolved,---That it be recommended to the General Committee, to grant the sum of £150 to the Baptist Missionary Society, to cover the expenses incurred in preparing the Bengali Psalter, as it appears that that Version is highly approved by the Committee of the Calcutta Auxiliary.

Resolved,---That provided the Committee of the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society approve of the translation of the Bengali Pentateuch, when presented to them by the Rev. Mr. Yates, they be authorized to pay to the missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society the sum of £250, with the assurance that this Society will be disposed to render further aid, as other parts of Mr. Yates's version of the Bengali Old Testament shall be presented to, and approved by, the Committee of the Calcutta Auxiliary.

Resolved,---That the above Resolutions be approved by the sub-Committee, and recommended to the general Committee for adoption.

Read and approved at a Meeting of the General Committee, held at the British and Foreign Bible Society House, London, April 4, 1836, the Right Hon. LORD BEXLEY, Patron, in the Chair.

On the following day, the above resolutions were forwarded to the Secretary of the Baptist Mission, with the following letter:---

“ Rev. John Dyer,

“ British and Foreign Bible Society, April 5, 1836.

“ My dear Sir,

“ I now send you the resolutions of our sub-Committee, as confirmed by the Committee yesterday. They have been so framed as to render it unnecessary for me to add any thing in the way of explanation. Hoping they may prove satisfactory to the Baptist Missionary Society,

“ Believe me, dear Sir,

“ Yours faithfully,

“ A BRANDRAM, *Secretary.*”

And both these documents, having been laid before the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society at their next sitting, were subsequently acknowledged in the following letter, by which the correspondence was closed.

“To the Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

“Rev. and dear Sirs,

“I beg leave, on behalf of the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, gratefully to acknowledge the aid rendered to the Bengali version of the Old Testament, as now in course of preparation by the Rev. W. Yates, of Calcutta.

“I am further to express the deep regret of the Committee that their application for aid in circulating the New Testament, as translated by the same individual, should have been declined, especially on the grounds specified in the communication you have kindly sent me.

“Sincerely desiring that an abundant blessing may rest on all your efforts to circulate the inspired volume, and that, whatever differences of opinion may exist among us, we may never cease to be influenced by the spirit and principles that volume so powerfully inculcates,

“I am, Rev. and dear Sirs,

“Very respectfully yours,

“JOHN DYER.”

C.

PROTEST

PRESENTED TO

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,

MARCH 6, 1837.

THE undersigned Ministers of the Baptist Denomination, feeling it incumbent upon them, as a solemn matter of conscience and duty, to bear their individual and united testimony against the Resolution of the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, refusing aid to the Bengali translation of the New Testament, executed by the Baptist Missionaries at Calcutta, because “the words for baptize, &c., are rendered by words signifying immersion;” and understanding that grants to several of the Versions prepared by the late venerable Dr. Carey have long been suspended on the same ground; submit the following statement to the members of that Society, and deliberately publish it to the world as an act to which they are impelled by a faithful regard for the interests of truth.

In common with their fellow Christians, they have been accustomed cheerfully to labour in the ranks of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and will yield to none in sincere and ardent attachment to its catholic constitution and noble design. They have rejoiced in its prosperity with honest delight; have sympathised in its difficulties with unaffected sorrow; and with lively gratitude have glorified God, because he has given it the pre-eminence over all kindred institutions, and crowned its efforts with unexampled success.

It is, consequently, with deep regret that they feel themselves

called upon to express their conviction of the unsoundness of the principles on which, in the present instance, its Committee has acted. They would gladly have continued in quiet and unobtrusive co-operation with it in their respective circles, each, according to his ability, promoting its object, and all loving its unsectarian spirit. But in the present crisis they cannot be silent. They can be no parties to what appears to them a departure from the original integrity of its proceedings, nor can they witness an attempt to evade translation, and thus to conceal from the heathen a portion of the word of God, without lifting up their solemn remonstrance against it.

From the correspondence which has passed on this subject between the Baptist Missionary Committee and the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, they perceive that every proper method has been employed by the former, but employed in vain, to prevent the conclusion which has at length been reached; and no hope being now left of inducing an alteration in this decision, they solemnly enter their PROTEST against it.

First, Because in their estimation, it is the primary duty of a translator to ascertain the precise meaning of the original text, and then to express that meaning as exactly as the nature of the language into which he translates it will admit. He is not at liberty to leave untranslated any word, the signification of which he knows, and can render by an equivalent term; and if he should do so, he is thereby guilty of keeping back part of the counsel of God. Two of Archbishop Newcome's rules for the conduct of a translator support this reason:---

"Rule I. The translator should express every word in the original by a literal rendering, where the English idiom admits of it, and where, not only purity, but perspicuity and dignity of expression can be preserved."

"Rule XII. The critical sense of passages should be considered, and not the opinions of any denomination of Christians whatever."

"The translators should be philologists, and not controversialists."

2. Because it is the province of the British and Foreign Bible Society to afford impartial aid to all faithful translations of the Holy Scriptures, not erecting itself into a tribunal of biblical criticism, nor taking upon itself, by the suppression of any part of inspired truth, to attempt a compromise between various denominations of Christians.

3. Because, the question being purely philological, a conscientious objection cannot be taken against the rendering given by the Missionaries, unless it be alleged that such rendering is unfaithful, which allegation, so far as the undersigned are aware, is not advanced; but simply that it is "considered objectionable by other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society."

4. Because, were the principle admitted, that translators are

not bound to convey into other tongues the true signification of words which may happen to involve controversies existing among different denominations of Christians, but in deference to the prevailing party may leave such words covered with a convenient, and, to all but learned men, an impenetrable veil, many other words immediately occur which should be thus treated; while truth, conscience, and inspiration would be sacrificed at the shrine of secular expediency, or party discussion.

5. Because the British and Foreign Bible Society circulates on the continent of Europe, and in the eastern parts of the world, several versions of the New Testament, in which the words now proposed to be left untranslated are translated in a similar manner to that adopted by the Baptist Missionaries.

6. Because the Resolution of the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, while it professes to be founded on a general principle, affects only a particular case, the whole Christian church being on the question at issue divided but into two sections, those who do and those who do not baptize by immersion. By adopting the course of which we complain, the Bible Society descends from its high pre-eminence as a Catholic Institution, ceases to be an incorporation of Christians of every community, and becomes essentially sectarian in its principle and practice.

7. Because those members of the British and Foreign Bible Society who are also members of the Established Church, with singular inconsistency unite in withholding aid for the reason assigned, since their church has expressly enjoined that mode of administering the ordinance of baptism which the terms employed in the Baptist translations describe, and allows no other but as an exception in cases specifically mentioned.

8. Because the principle,---now it is believed, for the first time laid down---that new versions, in order to obtain the support of the British and Foreign Bible Society, must in disputed points conform "to the practice resorted to in the English and other Versions," is fatal to that moral independence and strict fidelity which are among the primary qualifications of a translator of the Scriptures, and cannot, it is confidently presumed, be acted upon in many other instances, however readily it may be adopted in the present case.

9. Because, although the Vulgate, which is followed in this instance by the English Version and some others in the western parts of Europe, leaves the words in question untranslated, this circumstance is not attributable to any difference of opinion existing at the time in which it first appeared, as to the true meaning of the words themselves, the baptismal rite being then and for many centuries afterwards administered only by immersion; in confirmation of which it may be sufficient here to cite the authority of Bossuet, the Roman Catholic, and of the Protestant Episcopalian, Whitby. The words of the former are as follows: "We are able to make it appear, by the acts of coun-

cils and by the ancient rituals, that for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS baptism was thus administered *throughout the whole church*, as far as was possible." And the following are the words of the latter: "And this immersion being religiously observed by *all Christians* for THIRTEEN CENTURIES, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the Author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the clinici, or in present danger of death."

In putting forth this protest, the undersigned do not intend to convey the idea that each and all of the foregoing reasons were felt with equal force by every individual, some having been influenced in a greater degree by one, and others by another; but they all concur in expressing unfeigned sorrow that the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society has, by this measure, placed that Institution on what they deem an unconstitutional and unscriptural ground, and in bearing their deliberate and public testimony against it.

In conclusion they state, that they feel, as they trust, in its full weight, the responsibility of the position in which they place themselves by this public act, yet from that responsibility they do not shrink. Having thus discharged a painful but imperative duty, they are satisfied to leave the cause of truth, for which alone they are concerned, in the hands of Him, to whom it emphatically belongs, and who so works out the issues of all things as to promote its ultimate triumph, and therein to secure his own glory.

Acworth, James, A.M. President of Horton College, Bradford, Yorkshire	Bowes, W. B., Blandford Street, London
Aldis, John, Manchester	Brawn, Samuel, Loughton, Essex
Ashmead, George, Kingsthorpe	Brand, William, Northampton
Adams, Samuel, Walgrave	Beardsall, Francis, Manchester
Aveline, George, Loughborough	Burns, Jabez, St. Mary-le-bone
Arnot, George, Southsea	Bissill, John, Sutterton
Ayrton, Samuel, Derby	Butler, William, Heptonstall Slack
Anstie, Peter, Exeter	Bannister, Jno. Thos., Coventry
Amery, E., Collumpton	Barker, John, Towcester
Ashman, John, Southwold	Brooks, Joseph, Ridgmount
Aldiss, Robert, Fressingfield	Blackburn, James, Walgrave
Ashford, J., Brettle Lanc	Brooks, Thomas, (occasional preacher) Hinckley
Applegate, Thomas, Shefford	Baynes, Joseph, Wellington, Som- erset
Albrecht, H. Mirfield	Baylis, Willm. H., Wolverhampton
Amsden, T., Aston Clinton	Burchell, Willm. F., Falmouth
Blakeman, John, Evesham, Wor- cestershire	Beddow, B. Grampound
Brock, William, Norwich	Bromwich, Josh., Sheepshead
Briscoe, John Paul, Folkestone	Burditt, Cheney, Sutton in Elms
Broad, John, Kensington	Burditt, A., Oadby
	Bottomley, W. E., Foxton

- Banks, Robert, Newcastle
 Briggs, John, Newcastle
 Bailey, Joseph, Newcastle
 Birt, C. E., A.M., Portsea
 Burton, E. H., Landport, Portsea
 Burt, T. B., Beaulieu, Hants
 Brown, George, South Shields
 Busby, Charles, Crediton
 Barnes, William, Preseott
 Bedding, Edward, Cuddington,
 Bucks
 Blackmore, Samuel, Kington
 Buck, James, Rotherham
 Breeze, Richard, Lechlade
 Bane, John, Aylsham, Norfolk
 Baker, William, Statham, Norfolk
 Blakely, John Rix, Worstead, Nor-
 folk
 Belcher, Joseph, Greenwich
 Billingham, J. Cradley
 Betts, Henry, Yarmouth
 Bulgin, Samuel, Poole
 Birt, Isaiah, Hackney
 Blackmore, T. W., Upottery
 Birrell, C. M., Liverpool

 Chin, John, Walworth
 Clark, John, Folkestone
 Cramp, J. M., St. Peters, Secretary
 to the Isle of Thanet Bible
 Society
 Cubitt, J., Ilford, Essex
 Copley, William, Oxford
 Cox, F.A., D.D., L.L.D., Hackney
 Cheatle, George, Birmingham
 Cameron, J., Louth
 Campbell, John, Abergavenny
 Clark, James, Guilsborough
 Crabtree, William, Hinckley
 Capern, Henry, Long Buckley
 Cox, J. B. Hatch, Beauchamp
 Coombs, W. H., Taunton
 Craps, John, Lincoln
 Cornford, Samuel, Maidstone
 Clarke, Edmund, Truro
 Cooke, Thomas, Oswestry
 Cramp, Thomas, St. Peters
 Crambrook, Daniel, Dover
 Chapman, J. M., Yeovil
 Cakebread, C., Landport, Portsea
 Cole, George, Leamington
 Collins, Samuel, Grundisburgh, Suf-
 folk
 Cormack, Josiah, Sunderland
 Clarke, Robert, Bridgnorth
 Clark, David, Dronfield

 Clowes, Francis, Classical Tutor,
 Horton College
 Cooper, Joshua, Stoke Ash, Suffolk
 Catton, W., Chipping Norton
 Cutcliffe, William, Brayford, Devon
 Chamberlin, Charles, Norwich
 Clark, R. A., Fakenham
 Coleroft, William, Bramley
 Cousins, James, King Stanley
 Claypole, Edward A., Ross
 Clements, W., Halsted
 Castleden, James, Hampstead
 Comb, George, Oxford Street
 Carey, Eustace, Camberwell
 Crisp, Thos. S., Theological Tutor
 of Baptist College, Bristol
 Cater, Philip, Bath
 Crook, John, Hebden Bridge
 Carre, John, Jersey
 Cooper, James, Amsterdam
 Crook, Enoch, Battersea
 Chapman, J., Stogumber
 Cooper, W., Chesham

 Davis, Eiel, Regent St, Lambeth
 Davis, Ebenezer, Deal
 Davis, Joseph, Church Street, Black-
 friars
 Davis, Thomas, Chenies, Bucks
 Dobney, H. H., Great Missenden,
 Bucks
 Dyer, John, Secretary to Baptist
 Mission, Camberwell
 Douglass, J. J., London
 Derry, John, Barton
 Dunkley, John, Towcester
 Dawson, John, Newark-on-Trent
 Dyer, John J., Frome
 Davies, Samuel, Crewkerne
 Draper, B. H., Southampton
 Davies, Philip, Whitechurch, Hants
 Douglas, D., Hamsterley
 Diprose, Samuel, Ford, Bucks
 Dodwell, Charles, Long Crendon
 Dorney, Thomas, Bastington
 Dowson, Henry, Bradford
 De Fraine, Richard, Little Stoneham
 Dickerson, Philip, Little Ailie Street,
 London
 Denham, David, Unicorn Yard,
 Southwark
 Dore, William, Modbury
 Dean, James, Chalford
 Dean, James Stanly, Chalford
 Dunn, Joseph, Minchinhampton
 Dovey, William, Bermoudsey

- Davies, Daniel, Lixum
 Davies, Joseph, Denbigh
 Davis, John, Princes Risborough
 Davies, David, Evesham
 Dyer, F. W., Lockwood
 Darkin, Charles, Woodstock
 Davies, Daniel, Swansea
 Dossett, Daniel, Little King's Hill

 Edwards, John, Clapham
 Eyres, John, Otley, Suffolk
 Ewen, Thomas, March
 Everard, Henry, Spalding
 Edge, James, Sutton-on-Trent
 Evans, Benjamin, Blaby
 Elmer, R., Southampton
 Edgcombe, J. P., Dockhead, South-
 wark
 Evans, David, Login
 Evans, John, Carmarthen
 Elliott, E. E., Lydney
 Edward, James, Nottingham
 Early, William, Wootton, Beds.
 Evans, B., Scarborough
 Evans, Edward, Cynwyd
 Evans, John, Holywell
 Ellis, Robert, Llanelian
 Evans, Ellis, Cefnmawr
 Evans, David, Slack Lane
 Edmonds, T. C., Cambridge
 Edwards, William, Bugbrook
 Edmunds, I., Ilusfaen
 Evans, D., Lantrisant
 Elliot, C., Minehead
 Edwards, R., Deiras
 Edmunds, I., Bethesda
 Evans, Thomas, Beulah
 Evans, Thomas, Narbeth
 Edwards, David, Moriah
 Evans, James, Carleon

 Francies, George, Colchester
 Felkin, John, Secretary to B. S.
 Kirton in Lindsey
 Frearson, Thomas, Tottlebank
 Foskett, George, Blisworth
 Flood, James, Melbourn
 Fordham, Samuel, Hail Weston
 Fuller, William Henry, Penzance
 Fisher, William, Cold Rowley
 Franklin, Francis, Coventry
 Francis, Edward, Hereford
 Fuller, A. G., Blockley
 Facey, A. M., Muckworthy, Devon
 Fawcett, William, Ewood Hall
 Foster, Jonas, Farsly

 Frearson, R. S., Idle
 Fracer, T. H., Chapelford
 Fry, John, Coleford
 Fuller, I. G., Westbury, near Bristol
 Francis, John, Pontesbury
 Foster, I. H., Uckfield

 Garrington, John, Burnham, Essex
 Groser, William, Maidstone
 Green, Samuel, Jun., Walworth
 Goadby, Joseph, Ashby-de-la-Zouch
 Goadby, Joseph, Leicester
 Gough, Thomas T., Clipstone
 Giles, William, Preston
 Gray, Joshua, Brixton
 Godwin, B., Bradford
 Giles, J. E., Leeds
 Gooding, W. I., Hadleigh
 Gowing, John, Halesworth
 Glanville, William, Wantage
 Greenway, J. G., Netherton
 Green, John, Norwich
 Grace, Robert, Battle
 Gundry, Jonathan, Hendon
 Glynn, O. M., Cairiog
 Grainger, H. D., Waddesdon Hill
 Garside, Joseph, Wainsgate
 Gill, H. V., Parley
 Green, Joseph, Soham
 Gray, William, Northampton
 Griffiths, Thomas, Jersey
 Gravelle, W. Cwmfelin
 Gwynne, W. Carmel

 Hull, Edmund, Watford, Herts
 Humphrey, Robert, Taunton
 Hoby, James, D.D., Birmingham
 Hinton, J. H., M.A., Reading
 Hunter, Hugh, Nottingham
 Hiley, Francis, Llanwenarth
 Hancock, William, Harston
 Harris, Thomas, St. Austell
 Hinners, John, Shrewsbury
 Hawkins, W., M.A., Derby
 Hewn, W., Darlington
 Hatch, Samuel, S., Honiton
 Hockin, John, Thoverton
 Hopercraft, W., Long Crendon
 Hebditch, W., BlackDown, Somerset
 Ham, John, Birmingham
 Hall, B. C., Burford
 Hewett, John, Swaffham
 Hunt, James, Fakenham
 Hughes, Samuel, Radwen
 Hindes, Joseph, Blunham
 Hawkins, Henry, Stroud

- Hewitt, William, Painswick
 Hopley, Thomas, Hemel Hempstead
 Hall, J., Gorsley
 Hithersay, John, Kilham
 Hawkins, W., Shrewsbury
 Hewlitt, Samuel, Westminster
 Huxtable, Edgar, Classical Tutor, Baptist College, Bristol
 Hughes, Thomas, Dawn
 Hughes, John, Abergéle
 Hewlitt, J. P., Kingsbridge
 Harvey, J., Cullingworth
 Hudson, Thomas, H., Queenshead, Halifax
 Hollinrake, Henry, Birchcliffe
 Harris, William, Landbeach
 Haslop, John, Fenstanton
 Hyde, Robert, Salendine Nook
 Holmes, H. W., Polemoor

 Ingham, Richard, Nottingham
 Jones, John, March
 Judd, George, Conningsby
 Jarrom, Joseph, Wisbeach
 Jayne, George, Road
 Jones, William, Frome
 Jones, George, Sway, Hants
 Jones, Maurice, Leominster
 Jordan, John, Stanningly
 Jones, John A., Mitchell Street, London
 Jones, John, Blakeney
 Jones, Thomas, Chepstow
 Jones, Hugh, Cifabychan
 Jones, Daniel, Liverpool
 Jones, John, Handweidan
 James, Benjamin, St. Asaph
 Jackson, James, Bath
 Ingham, J., Lane Bottom Heaton
 Jenkinson, J., Kettering
 Jenkins, J., Hengoed
 Jones, A., Merthyr
 Jones, D., Cardiff
 James, J., Bridgend
 Jones, John, Blaeniferm
 Jones, Evan, Castle Town
 Jones, D., Newport
 Jones, T., Rhydylin
 Jarvis, Thomas, Jersey
 Ives, D., Gold Hill

 Kenny, Richard, Macclesfield
 Knight, Joseph, Wolvey
 Kirkbridge, Daniel, Hawkshead Hill

 Kent, M., Shrewsbury
 Kent, Samuel, Biggleswade
 King, Thomas, Bedford
 Knight, J., Little Staughton
 Keay, William, Wellington, Salop
 Keene, C. T., Pershore

 Lacey, C., Missionary to India
 Lewis, James, Llanwenarth
 Liggings, John (occasional preacher), Hinckley
 Leader, W., Maidstone
 Larwill, Joseph, Kenilworth
 Long, William, Stockton on Tees
 Larom, C., Sheffield
 Lingley, Isaac, Stowmarket
 Liddell, William, Westmancote
 Lewis, Edward, Highgate
 Lewis, J. P., Diss
 Lawrence, J., Moleston
 Loyd, J., Llangloffan

 Millard, James, Lymington, Hants
 Morris, Thomas, Portsea
 Mursell, J. P., Leicester
 May, William, North Curry
 Medway, G., Creech St. Michael
 Marriott, Thomas, Milton
 Manning, Enoch, Gamlingay
 Miller, R., Braunston
 Marston, S., Great Grimsby
 Matthews, W., Canterbury
 Morgan, Thomas, Birmingham
 May, Richard, Barnstaple
 Macpherson, J., Hull
 Murch, W. H., Theological Tutor of Stepney College
 Morrell, Daniel, Holy Cross
 Moulton, G. W., Tenterden
 Mills, John, Winchcombe
 Middleditch, Thomas, Ipswich
 Moore, Timothy, Shadwell, London
 Munsey, Ellis, Botisham, Lode
 Miles, William, Newport
 Morris, Thomas, Penygarn, Pontypool
 Maurice, James, Walsal
 Middleditch, C. J., Ashdon
 May, J. H., Pill
 Maddeys, George, Morcott
 Morris, M., Llangloffan

 New, I., Arnsby
 Neave, John, Southsea
 Nunn, James, Ipswich
 Norris, Joseph, Rattlesden

- Norton, William, Bow
 Nicholson, Samuel, Plymouth
 Normanton, James, Driffield
 Newman, Thos. F., Shortwood
 Norgrove, John C., Clipping Sodbury
 Nicholson, John, Kingsbridge
 Nicholson, William, Halifax
 Naunton, D., Ystrad
 Nichols, A., Keighly

 Overbury, F., Chatham
 Offord, John, Exeter
 Owen, William, Madley
 Oakford, John, Reepham
 Overbury, R. W., Eagle St., London
 Owen, J. J., Monmouth
 Owen, Thomas, Eastcombes
 Orchard, G. H., Steventon
 Oliver, Edward, Penycal
 Owen, D., Sardis

 Pritchard, George, Keppel Street, London
 Price, Thomas, D.D., Devonshire Square, London
 Puntis, James, Norwich
 Poile, W. F., Lynn, Norfolk
 Peggs, James, Bourne
 Pike, J. G., Derby
 Pike, J. B., Boston
 Pope, George, Collingham
 Phillips, John, Whitchurch, Salop
 Peters, Samuel, Great Gransden
 Pengilly, Richard, Newcastle
 Paine, William, Eythorne
 Payne, J., Ashford
 Price, Joseph, Montacute
 Pyne, Robert, Exeter
 Piggott, Joseph, Waddesdon, Bucks
 Parker, John, West Bromwich
 Pryce, Richard, Coate
 Pulsford, Thomas, Great Torrington
 Powell, Alfred, Salehouse, Norfolk
 Packer, S., Chelsea
 Payne, William, Chesham
 Pickering, William, Nottingham
 Porter, James, Brooke
 Preece, Joseph, Woodchester
 Peacock, John, Goswell Road
 Probert, Evans, Bristol
 Prichard, John, Llangollen
 Peechey, W., Bath
 Price, Joseph, Alcestey
 Pottinger, Thomas, Swanwick
 Pock, Thomas, Barnwell

 Peters, Robert, Waterbeach
 Poole, Henry, Newport
 Price, Stephen, Aberlychan
 Phillips, David, Carleon
 Perrey, A., M. D., Boston
 Phillip, E., Narbeth
 Phillips, R., Glenchyd
 Price, E., Moleston

 Reynolds, Titus Davies, Earls Colne, Essex
 Rees, David, Burton Latimer
 Roe, Charles Hill, Clapham
 Room, Charles, Southwark
 Rogers, Thomas, Fleet
 Roberts, Thomas, Llanelly
 Roberts, William, Glascoed
 Roberts, John, Llansilin
 Reynolds, William, Sudbury
 Russell, Hugh, Broughton, Hants
 Rutter, T., Ashley, Hants
 Robinson, Robert, Lifton, Devon
 Robinson, William, Kettering
 Runacles, John, Charsfield
 Rogers, William, Dudley
 Roberts, Thomas, Bristol
 Roberts, Robert, Llanefydd
 Roberts, William, Mold
 Rothery, Joseph, London
 Rigby, John, Blackley
 Roberts, John, Tredegar
 Roberts, David, Sinhowy
 Roberts, William, Twyngwyn
 Roff, Robert, Swansea
 Rogers, John, Eynsford
 Rees, John, Southdairy
 Richards, J., Middlemill

 Saffery, Philip John, Salisbury
 Statham, John, Amersham, Bucks
 Steadman, Thomas, Bradford
 Shirley, Thomas, Sevenoaks, Kent
 Stovel, Charles, Prescott St., London
 Steane, Edward, Camberwell
 Sprigg, James, Ipswich, Secretary to the East Suffolk Bible Society
 Stubbins, I., Missionary to India.
 Stevenson, John, A. M., Southwark
 Stocks, Richard, Castle Donnington
 Stevenson, Thomas, Leicester
 Stevenson, Edward, Chesham
 Stembidge, Job, Loughwood, Devon
 Simmons, James, A.M. Leicester
 Spasshat, Joseph, Redruth

- Sample, G., Newcastle-upon-Tyne
 Sharp, Charles, Bradninch, Devon
 Stalker, Alexander, Sheffield
 Stephens, Edward, Campden
 Swan, Thomas, Birmingham
 Stonehouse, George, Middleton
 Cheney
 Spurgeon, William, Neatishead
 Simmons, John, M. A., Bluntisham
 Saunders, Moses, Haworth
 Steadman, William, D. D., Bradford
 Scott, Peter, Shipley
 Scarlet, George, Gildersome
 Scarlet, William, Gildersome.
 Shenston, J. B. Eldon St., London
 Smith, James, Shoreditch, London
 Stephens, J. G., Kidderminster
 Savage, John, Stourbridge
 Scott, Thomas, Norwich
 Sprague, Joseph Lee, Bovcy Tracey
 Stenson, John, Chelsea
 Sincox, Stephen, Poole
 Soule, J. M., Lewes
 Stenson, Elam, Tarporley
 Shaw, Joseph, Heaton
 Spooner, John, Barnoldswick
 Stephen, D. Rlys, Swansea
 Sutton, S., Watchett

 Tilley, Thomas, Forton, Hants
 Tunnicliff, Jabez, Longford
 Thomas, Micah, Abergavenny
 Taylor, James, Hinckley
 Tunley, Richard, Northampton
 Trestrail, Frederick, Newport, Isle
 of Wight
 Turquand, James, Milford, Hants
 Tyler, Peter, Haddenham
 Thorne, Francis, Newton, Devon
 Taylor, David, Bingley
 Tottman, James, Laxfield
 Tomlin, William, Chesham
 Tay, Thomas, Southill
 Trotman, Daniel, Tewkesbury
 Thomas, John, Brosley
 Thomson, Robert, Perth
 Taylor, S. N., Shipston-on-Stour
 Thomas, Timothy, Newcastle Em-
 lyn
 Tyso, Joseph, Wallingford
 Thomas, Thomas, Meltham
 Thomas, T., Cwesypork
 Thomas, E., Cwesypork
 Thomas, Timothy, Bethesda
 Thomas, Thomas, Theological Tu-
 tor of the Baptist College, Pon-
 typool
 Thomas, William, Newport
 Talbot, C. B., Wendover
 Thomas, E., Hansworth Hill
 Thomas, B., Narbeth
 Thomas, T. E., Ffynnon
 Thomas, W., Salem

 Upton, William, St. Albans
 Upton, Robert, Chelsea
 Verow, Robert, Shilton,
 Vernon, C. W., Appledore
 Venimore, James, Ingham
 Vincent, Samuel, Yarcombe|

 Watts, John, Maze Pond, South-
 wark
 Wallis, Joseph, Commercial Road,
 London
 Woollacott, Christopher,
 Wigg, Samuel, Leicester
 Wright, Samuel, Lincoln
 Wayland, Abraham, Lyme Regis
 Williamson, James, North Shirds
 Woodcock, Benjamin, Hinckley
 Williams, Enoch, Thrapstone
 Wright, Daniel, Coseley
 Wassell, John, Willenhall
 Wake, Thomas Washington, Kis-
 lingbury
 Wheeler, Francis, Moulton
 Williams, D.M., Maidstone
 Wilson, Charles, Helston
 Watts, Isaac, Andover
 Wilson, Daniel, Tunstall
 Waldron, F., Walsingham
 Wilson, A., Sunderland
 Williams, Daniel, Fairford
 Wassell, David, Fairford
 Wright, George, Beccles
 Ward, George, Tittleshall
 Winterbotham, J., Haworth
 Woodman, C. B., Artillery Street,
 London
 Williams, William, Grafton Street,
 London
 Wright, Thomas, Lydbrook
 Williams, John, Dereham
 Wilcocks, Thomas, Devonport
 Webb, James, Stonehouse
 White, Daniel, Cirencester
 Webster, R. E., Kingston
 Wylie, D. S., Liverpool
 Williams, W., Ryeford
 Wyke, J. C., Hunmanby
 Watts, John, Wotton-under-Edge
 Winter, Thomas, Bristol
 Williams, Robert, Knthim

Williams, Thomas, Llansawn
 Webb, John, East Knoyle
 Welsh, Thomas, Newbury
 Watson, Nathaniel, Cowling Hill
 Wheeler, Benjamin, Atchlench
 Webb, Samuel, Langley
 Wallis, Joseph, Needingworth
 Wilkinson, William, Earby
 Whitewood, Samuel, Halifax
 Williams, J., Wowntrodan

Williams, R., Lansadvon
 Williams, John, Trosnant
 Williams, R., Newport
 Waters, Thomas, M. A. Worcester
 Young, B. C., South Shields
 Yeadon, J., Horsforth
 Yardley, S., Summer Hill
 Yates, William, Stroud
 Young, William, Old Kent Road

D.

Extracts of a Letter from Rev. Dr. Yates, &c. to Rev. Dr. Sharpe, of Boston.

Calcutta, Sept. 12, 1836.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I received your letter of the 5th of April on the 8th of this month, since which I have had to prepare and preach three sermons, besides other work, so that I may say I am replying to it with the least possible delay. We are very busy just now with our second edition of the Bengali New Testament, wishing to get it through the press before the departure of our brother Pearce for England.

I am sorry to find that on the points you particularly mention, you have been misinformed. Considering the source of your information, I do not wonder at your relying upon it, and feeling certain that it must be correct. I shall now reply to your queries, and then give you my views on the subject.

Your first query is:—Did the Serampore Missionaries from the first in their early translations of the Scriptures *translate* or *transfer* the words baptizo, &c.? They *translated* them. I have seen their first and their last edition, and in each the word is *translated*. I have been a reader of their versions now for three and twenty years, and I have never seen one yet in which the word was not *translated*.

Next, if they translated, was it by a word which signified exclusively to immerse? It was. The word used by Dr. Carey was *doob*, which has no other meaning than that of dipping.

3. Have they never varied from the first to the present time? I may confidently say, never. Attempts were made by individuals to induce Dr. Carey to alter and transfer the term. To whom he gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour.

Lastly. Was it a matter of controversy between them and the Episcopalians? Mrs. Y., having been at Serampore from the commencement of the mission there, I have inquired of her, and she informs me that previous to my arrival in the country, there were frequent discussions on the subject between them and Mr. Brown, the clergyman at the Mission Church. I am inclined, however, to think that these discussions were rather about translating than trans-

ferring the word, for since that time the Episcopalians have translated the word—Thomason in his Arabic, and Martyn in his Hindustani and Persian versions. With the exception of one version made by a gentleman who understood neither Latin nor Greek, it is a well known fact, that every version, by every denomination here, had the word *translated*. With one solitary exception, therefore, the present resolution of the Bible Society, will be the undoing of all that has been done from the beginning by all parties! When I was in England, after my visit to America, Mr. Hughes conversed with me on the subject, and wrote also upon it to Dr. Carey. In consequence of complaints sent home from Calcutta, he had come to the conclusion that it was desirable for the sake of peace to *transfer* and not *translate* the word baptizo; but he could not persuade either of us that it was our duty to be *unfaithful*, even for the sake of peace; Dr. Carey would never listen for a moment to any proposals of the kind.

From what I have said, I think you will see that if the Bible Society at the first had any principle to guide them, that principle was the liberal one of leaving to all translators the same power over the word baptize, as over the word bishop, elder, election, &c. While this was done, we used each other's versions, making allowance for any rendering of a particular word. This appears to me the only principle on which they could act consistently. If they dictate to translators on the word baptize, they have the same right to dictate upon every other word—and where will this end? Disputes have already commenced about the term bishop, &c. and they will have in a short time to issue an edict that none of these terms shall be translated, and thus the word of God will be rendered unintelligible to the natives. As Baptists, I think we shall be gainers by the plan they have now adopted, providing we print Testaments with every word translated, and they print with the same transferred. But I clearly see that all depends on these two points: will the Baptists be faithful to their cause, and print at least the New Testament for themselves? and will the Pædobaptists be faithful in transferring the word, and not translating it? I have some fears on each of these points. My hopes prevail above my fears in regard to the Baptists, and I trust they will come forward with a noble determination “neither to add to nor take from” the words of the book of life, but give every word its faithful rendering. I am sure they are well capable of supplying the means. You may, perhaps, think it is uncharitable in me to doubt whether the Pædobaptists will be faithful in transferring the term baptizo, after having insisted upon it so much. I will state to you a fact, and leave you to judge whether there is not some ground for suspicion, without being uncharitable. You know the pains they have taken to prevail on us to transfer the word; and to accommodate them in the 5,000 copies printed for them, we agreed to do so. Well, at the very same time two gospels were ordered by the Committee here to be printed in Hindustani. On account of the delay which had taken place in the first, I was requested by the Committee to read the proofs of the second. When I

went into their office and asked for a copy of the gospel that had been printed, it was given me; and I found, to my utter astonishment, that the word baptizo had not been transferred, but translated throughout by the term *ghosal*, which signifies to wash. I make no comment on this, but leave the fact to speak for itself. If the Episcopalians, &c. had let things proceed in the same manner that they had done from the beginning, they would have been no losers. The greater number of missionaries belonging to them, and the greater number of translations in extensive use, would have been executed by men of their own views. In other cases, a plan of concession might have been adopted, as in our Bengali version, which would have met the views of all parties—it would only have involved the necessity of printing in a version required by us, a few copies with the word translated; but the principle now adopted, if fully acted out, will lead to as many Bible Societies as there are denominations. I have no doubt what has transpired will be overruled for good. In every age the church needs something to humble it, and something that will tend to humility in another world. This is the age of Christian liberality, and yet in this age of boasted liberality it has so happened, that two of the largest societies in the Christian world have refused to give their aid to the circulation of the word of God, because one word in it was translated according to the original sense, which the wisest and the best of men of all denominations have attached to it. Other serious objections may exist on words of infinitely more importance, but these can all be covered with the mantle of forbearance, and the version encouraged, printed, and published: but to translate the word baptizo to immerse, which all acknowledge to be its first, though not only meaning, is a crime of such magnitude even in this liberal and benevolent age, that the Baptists who have been guilty of it, are deemed worthy of excision? Well may it be said, What is man? Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Yours affectionately,
W. YATES.

Extract of a Letter from Rev. W. H. Pearce to a Correspondent in America.

Calcutta, Sept. 10, 1836.

MY DEAR CHRISTIAN BROTHER,

I HAVE just-received your letter under date of the 14th May, and as there is a vessel advertised to sail for the United States in a day or two, I lose no time in replying to the query it contains.

Allow me then distinctly to state, and authorize you, if necessary, on my testimony, to assure the Christian public of America, that in every version of the New Testament which Dr. Carey translated or edited, he translated the Greek word *baptizo* by a word signifying "to dip." He never merely transferred it, I believe, from his oft

repeated declarations, that he would have felt himself criminal in doing so, with the views which he entertained as to the meaning of the word, founded on its interpretation as given in every Greek Lexicon (except in recent ones, when a natural desire to justify the *present* practice of our Pædobaptist brethren has led to such interpretations) on its use by Josephus (like the apostles a *Jew* writing in the *Greek* language, and at the *same period*) on the translation of the word in the early Asiatic versions, and in many modern European ones, on the practice of the Greek church from the earliest period, and on the early practice too of the church of England, and other churches reformed from the church of Rome,—as evidenced by *large Fonts* for immersing infants, and by the directions of the rubrick, as still preserved in the book of Common Prayer, and on the great cloud of witnesses who, while they practice sprinkling, have admitted that it was a departure, though in their view an *allowable* one, from the apostolical mode. With views founded on these and other reasons, he was firmly persuaded, that the intention of the Spirit of God was to describe and direct *immersion*. And if so, why in this, any more than in the words “church,” “congregation,” “bishop,” “bishopric,” “presbyter,” “deacon,” “deaconness,” &c., all equally affecting denominational views, and about the proper meaning of which there is far greater diversity of opinion; should he smother the convictions of his own mind, and what he believed to be the voice of the Spirit of God? Mr. Chamberlain, our worthy Baptist brother, who translated the New Testament into the Beaj Bhasha dialect, entered into the same views, and translated the word in the same manner. Had either of them *not* done so, I feel persuaded he would have felt himself exposed to the curse denounced against any man who “takes away” from the word of God’s prophecy (Rev. xxii. 19), and considered himself an unfaithful and a traitorous translator.

The same conviction of the *right*, which, by the constitution of the Bible Society, every one had to translate the Greek terms for baptism, as his conscience dictated, has been entertained by *every translator* of the Scriptures whom I know in this part of India, most indeed have *exercised* that right. The excellent Henry Martyn, (whose Hindustani version of the New Testament was the *first* executed by a minister not of our denomination), *translated*—not *transferred*—the word, both in the Hindustani and Persian. So did Mr. Thomason, an Episcopalian clergyman, and Secretary to the Calcutta Bible Society, in his Arabic version; and so has done Mr. Bowley, a Church of England Missionary, in his Hinduwi version; yea, strange to say, *since* the Bible Society here declined all aid to our Bengali version (though otherwise anxious to make use of it), because we felt it our duty to translate the word by “*immerse*,” they have issued a large edition of the Hindustani gospels with the word *translated* by “*wash*,” according to the views of our Pædobaptist brethren. I mention this, not to blame the whole of the Committee, for many of them were ignorant of it; but to show the right which Mr. Bowley, who revised the sheets, felt *he* had, if he chose, to *translate* the word.

The American Bible Society, I have ever understood, was formed on the same principle as the British and Foreign Bible Society. Like it, it has doubtless issued thousands of German and other Testaments, with the word translated by "immerse," and as in the former case, many of its translators have felt themselves at full liberty to translate the word according to their different views of its meaning. I had therefore certainly imagined, that its managers would have most cheerfully allowed the Baptists to express in such copies of the Scriptures, as *they* required for distribution, their own views of the question, leaving it to Pædobaptist translators, in the versions *they* required, to give what interpretations of the original word *their* consciences dictated to be right. But this, I see, is not allowed. A departure from the original course, as understood by many, with regard to foreign distribution, is now determined on by the great majority. Be it so—but surely justice requires that *all* parties should approve the change, or that when such a principle is established, those who do *not* approve of it, should be furnished with their full complement of funds that they may be enabled to carry on the work *alone*. While I would not for a moment imagine the decision of the managers to be dictated by any but the purest motives, yet it is certainly open to severe animadversion. The present is but the commencement of a scene of interferences with the consciences of translators, which will eventually divide this noble specimen of Christian union, into fragments as numerous as there are denominations. This is a cause for deep regret, and on this account I deplore the step now taken. On *denominational* grounds it gives me not the least anxiety. I fully believe it will be overruled for good. As one of your worthy correspondents states, "The American Baptists are *able* to give the heathen the scriptures translated in every language of the world;" and I trust, that with the hope hereafter of uniting the English Baptists in the glorious work, they will at once make the attempt. No one feels more delight than myself in union with other denominations, when it does not interfere with duty, but when, as in this case, our body is forbidden, unless we pursue also *separate* measures, to exhibit, in the scriptures translated by ourselves, what we fully believe to be "the truth as it is in Jesus;" we have no alternative. Our Pædobaptist friends themselves must expect from us, as conscientious men, that we should act in accordance with our principles; and will venerate the self-denial and zeal so consonant with our character as faithful servants of Christ, which distinct exertions will elicit. I trust, therefore, you will *all* unite in making the effort, and may great success attend it.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM H. PEARCE.

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ON THE DUTY OF TRANSLATORS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN REGARD TO THE WORD BAPTIZO.

BY THE LATE MR. W. GREENFIELD, M.R.A.S.,

Superintendent of the Translating and Editing Department of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

“IF the motives of the writer were not so apparent, it might occasion no little surprise, that a clergyman of the church of England should accuse others of sectarian principles for rendering βαπτίζω in the sense of *immersion*; a sense which is thus fully recognised in the rubrick of that church:---‘And then naming it after them (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it) he shall DIP it in the water discreetly and warily,’ &c. ‘But if they certify that the child is *weak*, it shall suffice to *pour* water upon it,’ &c. To the same purpose in the rubrick for adult baptism, it is directed that the priest ‘shall dip him in the water, or pour water upon him.’ With this agree, not only the size of every font which has any pretensions to antiquity, and ancient sculptures and paintings representing baptism, but also the first liturgy of King Edward VI., which required baptism to be administered by trine immersion; and a catechism set forth in the same year (1548), by Abp. Cranmer, in which not only the language he employs, but also a cut prefixed to the *Sermon of Baptisme*, fully expresses the meaning of the writer. William Tyndale, also, (in his *Obedience of a Christian man*, &c.,) speaks of ‘the *plungynge* into the water as signyfying that we dye and are *buryed* with Chryste as concernynge the olde lyfe of Synne which is Adam; and the *pullynge out* again as sygnyfying that we *ryse agayn* with Chryste in a new lyfe.’ It would therefore appear that an *exception* has been converted into a *general rule*, and that even *pouring* has been changed into *sprinkling*. But I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I am neither a baptist, nor the son of a baptist; nor is it here my business to undertake a defence of their cause. The quantity of water employed, or the specific mode of administering the rite, is, in my opinion, of little or no consequence. In adducing the above evidence, therefore, it was simply with the view of evincing, how utterly inconsistent it was for a clergyman to accuse the Serampore Missionaries of sectarianism, in employing the term immersion for baptism; while that sense was so fully recognised, though not now acted upon, by the established church. Indeed, were this charge to be held valid, it would be difficult to assign the limits to which it should extend. It may be safely affirmed, that many of the most accurate and valuable versions, both ancient and modern, are involved in the same accusation; and that there is not one which is directly hostile to that interpretation. As it will place this subject upon a proper basis, I beg leave to exhibit a statement of some of the more important of these versions; and, in order that I may be exonerated from the

charge of partiality, or an unfair colouring, to adduce the definitions of the various words employed from the most unexceptionable sources.

“ Thus, then, the ancient Peshito Syriac version uniformly renders βαπτίζω by ܒܢܝܘܢܐ, which is thus defined by Schaaf :

“ Abluit se, ablutus, intinctus, immersus in aquam, baptizatus est, Hebr. ܒܢܝܘܢܐ Stetit. Arab. ܐܘܨܘܢܐ Re altiore, columnâ, palo sustinuit, fulsit, stabilivit, erexit. Tinxit, baptizavit. Conjug. ii. Fulsit. sustinuit columnâ, palove. Baptizavit. Conj. v. Baptizatus fuit. *Ethpeel*, ܒܢܝܘܢܐ Idem quod *Peal*. *Aphel*. ܒܢܝܘܢܐ Immersit, (Num. 31. 23,) Baptizavit.’

“ Our learned countryman Castell explains it in a similar manner ; upon which Michaelis observes,

“ In hac baptizandi significatione conferunt haud pauci cum Hebraico ܒܢܝܘܢܐ stetit, ita ut stare sit, stare in flumine, illoque mergi. Mihi verisimilius, diversum plane ab ܒܢܝܘܢܐ, literumque aliqua permutatione ortum ex ܒܢܝܘܢܐ submergere.*”

“ But whatever may be its derivation, it is perfectly clear that its proper signification is to immerse.

“ Thus also the Arabic in Walton’s Polyglott, the Arabic of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c., employ the word ܐܘܨܘܢܐ, which we have seen is perfectly identical with the Syriac ܒܢܝܘܢܐ.

“ In the Ethiopic version, also, the word ጠጠፍ is employed, which Ludolf thus explains :

“ Conj. VI. ጠጠፍ, ‘Immersus fuit, in genere, Jos. 3. in specie Baptizatus fuit. Lu. 3. 21. Inf. ጠጠፍ : Cum baptizatus esset. Matt. 3. 16. እገጠፍ : Baptizavit. Matt. 3. 11. Acts 1. 5. (2) Ad religionem Christianam convertit. Christianum effecit. Hinc inepta Metaph. Pharisæis tribuitur, Proselytum effecit ; quasi v. illud mediante baptismo factum fecissent. Matt. 23. 16. Mark 7. 4. Respondet Græco βαπτίζω, Immergere, abluere ; sed improprie videntur accepisse.’

“ The words employed in the ancient Coptic version as correspondent to βαπτίζω, βαπτισμός, &c., also convey precisely the same idea of immersion ; as will be perfectly evident from the following definitions taken from the Coptic Lexicon of Le Croze, edited by Woide :

* There is another Syriac word for baptism, which is employed by the Syrian Baptists, and which I long since proved, in opposition to the statement of the late Editor of Calmet, also meant to dip. The word alluded to is ܒܢܝܘܢܐ, which is applied in the Syriac Peshito version of the Old Testament to the dipping of hyssop in blood, Exod. xii. 22 ; the dipping of the foot in oil, Deut. xxxiii. 24, or in water, Jos. iii. 15, or in blood, Psal. lxxviii. 24 ; and in the New Testament, to the dipping of the hand in a dish, Matt. xxvi. 23, of the finger in water, Luke vii. 33, 44, &c. I observe, that the last Editor of Calmet has had the fairness and candour to append these observations to the original remarks of the former Editor. See Fragments, No. 615.

“**ῶλεσ**, III, καταποντισμὸς, Vulg. præcipitatio, Ps. liv. 4. βαπτισμὸς, baptismus, Matt. iii. 7, et alibi.

Item, mergere, submergere, καταποντίζειν, καταδύνειν, descendere in profundum. Exod. xv. 5. καταπίνεσθαι, devorari. Ps. cvi. 27. (βαπτίζεσθαι, submergi. Lev. xi. 32.)

ῶλεσ, βαπτίζειν, baptizare. Matt. iii. 11, cum **ἐδῶρι** compositum: ἐνδύνειν, irrepere, penetrare in locum. 2 Tim. iii. 6.

βιολεσ, **ζαν**, βαπτισμοί, baptismi. Ebr. vi. 2.

Item, baptizari. **εψτωλεσ** baptizatus est. Cateches. Shenutii. MS. **πλετωλεσ**, ^εβαπτίζοντο, baptizabantur. Mat. iii. 6. Marc. i. 5. Passim.

“The Gothic of Ulphilas employs a perfectly correspondent term to our *dip*, *daupjan*, which is thus defined by Junius in the glossary appended to the four Gospels, published at Stockholm, in 1671 :

“Baptizare. S. **δδρα**. A. S. *depan*, *dyppan*. Alem. *taufen*, *taufan*. T. *doopen* Dan. **δδβε**. Gr. *δύω*, *mergo*, *δύπτω*, *aquas subeo*. S. *Doppa fig* Ital. *tuffare*, *submergere*.”

“Among the modern versions which render βαπτίζω by to *immerse* are the German of Luther, the Dutch, Danish, and Swedish; which employ the above words pointed out by Junius. Other versions, which have apparently steered between the two extremes, by rendering βαπτίζω by *washing* or *ablution*, as the **دوان** of the Persian of Martyn (though he even has sometimes employed the phrase **دست تجمید**, which can only mean *ablution by dipping*), are in fact decidedly on the side of the Serampore translators. It is evident, that to wash the *body* or *person*, without specifying any particular part of the body, must necessarily denote to *bathe*, which clearly implies *immersion*.

“The only other mode that has been adopted (for I believe none has ever had the hardihood to render βαπτίζω, to *pour* or *sprinkle*), is that of retaining the Greek word; as the *baptizare* of the Latin, the *battizare* of the Italian, the *bautizar* of the Spanish, the *baptizer* of the French, and our *baptise*. This is obviously no translation; and but ‘darkening counsel by words without knowledge.’ It would naturally lead to the *pasch*, *azymes*, and other barbarities of the Douay version, which even the advocates of this mode would be among the first to deprecate; and, instead of the poor heathen hearing ‘in their *own tongue*’ the wonderful works of God, they would be under the necessity either of studying Greek, in order to understand the real sense of the terms employed, or be content with the interpretation of their teachers. The adoption, however, of the Greek word, it is clear, militates nothing against our Baptist brethren, and decides nothing as to the real import of the term.* Each party

* It should, however, be remarked, that though these translators adopted the Greek word, yet they clearly understood it in the sense of immersion. Thus Dio-

may with equal propriety claim it as being favourable to his cause, according as he may understand the original term whence these various words are derived. As, however, βαπτίζω appears evidently to exclude the idea of *pouring*, or of *sprinkling*, and as the only other idea that can be attached to it is that of *washing*, which, when applied irrestrictively to the body, must, as above stated, denote to *bathe*, which implies *immersion*; it may justly be considered as decidedly in favour of the Serampore translator. That such is indeed the primitive sense of the Greek word, its derivation from βάπτω, to *dip*, is sufficient to evince; and is thus expressly affirmed by Schleusner, with whom the most respectable lexicographers agree:

“Proprie: *immergo ac intingo, in aquam mergo, a βάπτω, et respondet Hebraico* בָּבַט *2 Reg. v. 14, in vers. Alex. et* עָבַט *apud Symmachum Psalm lxxviii. 5, et apud insertum, Psalm ix. 6. In hac autem significatione nunquam in N. T. [nisi in baptizandi sensu] sed eo frequentius in script. Gr. legitur, v. c. Diod. Sic. I. c. 36, de Nilo exundante: τῶν χερσαίων θηρίων τὰ πολλὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ περιληφθέντα διαφθείρεται βαπτίζόμενα, multum terrestrium animalium, a flumine deprehensa, submersione pereunt. Strabo Lib. xii. p. 391, et xiv. p. 458, ed. Casaub. Polyb. III. c. 72, μίλις ἕως τῶν μαστῶν οἱ πεζοὶ βαπτίζόμενοι διέβαινον. Idem. v. c. 47, et aliis in locis, quæ larga manu dedit Schwarzus in Comment. Crit. Ling. Gr. p. 232, seq.*”

“I trust that these observations will suffice to exonerate the Serampore missionaries from the charge of bigotry and sectarianism, in thus conscientiously rendering βαπτίζω, to *immerse*. Bigotry, that is, ‘blind zeal, or prejudice,’ they cannot justly be accused of, while they have the primitive sense of the term, and the rendering of so many ancient and modern translations as the foundation upon which they have grounded their version; nor can they consistently be charged with sectarianism, while they are found in company with the churches of Syria, Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and others, together with the Church of England itself. If they be bigots, I know not what name the advocates for pouring, or sprinkling, who have no such basis to rest on, merit; and if theirs be a sect, it must be confessed to be a very ancient and a very extensive one. It should be remembered, that the question respecting the *mode* of administering the rite of baptism is a very different thing from that respecting the *subjects* of baptism, or that of pædo-baptism and adult baptism. Concerning the latter, our opponent brings forward no charge, nor even insinuates that the Serampore translators

dati explains “battezzati,” Matt. iii. 6, in the edition of 1607, by “*tuffati, nell acqua, per un sacro segno, e cerimonia, testificante, e suggellante la rimessione, e purgamento de’ peccati nel sangue di Christo; e la purification degli animi per la virtù dello Spirito santo: per laquale altresì i battezzati s’ubbligavano di conversarsi puri, ad ogni lor potere, di peccato: esercitandosi in una continua conversione, et amendamento di vita: vedi Luc. iii. 3:*” *DIPPED IN THE WATER, for a sacred sign and ceremony, testifying and sealing the remission, and purging away of sin in the blood of Christ, and the purification of their minds by the power of the Holy Spirit,*” &c.

have ever corrupted or misrepresented a single passage to suit their own peculiar views on this topic.

“But there is another point of view in which the opponents of the Serampore missionaries should consider the subject; and one which involves the most important consequences. Before they ‘arraign the British and Foreign Bible Society as guilty of a gross and unpardonable dereliction of duty,’ in aiding the Serampore translators, and prefer a recommendation for them to withdraw that aid; they should be fully prepared to carry their censure, as well as their recommendation, to a much greater extent. In consistency, if that aid be withdrawn from the Serampore missionaries, because they have rendered βαπτίζω, to *immerse*, then must it also be withdrawn from the churches of Syria, of Arabia, of Abyssinia, of Egypt, of Germany, of Holland, of Denmark, &c.; and the venerable Peshito Syriac version, the Arabic Versions of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c.; the Ethiopian, the Coptic, and other versions, must all be suppressed. If, however, they are not thus prepared to carry their recommendation to its fullest extent, then must they close their mouths for ever against their Baptist brethren. But should a faction so far prevail over the good sense of the Committee, and the sound and catholic principles upon which the Society is founded, and which have ever been its boast and glory, as well as the most powerful means of its extraordinary success, then its ‘honour will be laid in the dust;’ and, from a splendid temple in the service of which the whole Christian world could cordially unite, it would dwindle into a contemptible edifice, dedicated to party feelings, motives, and views. The broad basis upon which it is founded is its strength and security; contract this within narrower limits, and it falls into ruins.”—*Defence of the Serampore Mahratta Version*, pp. 29—45.

THE BAPTISTS AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

MEMORIAL,

RELATING TO THE

BENGALI AND OTHER VERSIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

MADE BY BAPTIST MISSIONARIES IN INDIA,

PRESENTED TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD BEXLEY, PRESIDENT,

THE VICE-PRESIDENTS, THE COMMITTEE, AND PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

OF

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,

JANUARY 6, 1840,

BY THE

COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

IN the document now submitted to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, it is intended to make another, and final effort, to induce a reversal of the measure by which translations of the New Testament executed by Baptist missionaries in India have been denied the support of that institution.

In attempting this object, the Memorialists are impelled by a solemn conviction of the duty they owe to the truth, to the heathen, and to the Bible Society itself.

The question at issue is one affecting not simply their own denomination. It involves principles of common concern to all who are engaged in giving the Sacred Scriptures to the nations, the recognition of which alone can, in their opinion, relieve the Bible Society from embarrassment, and enable it with an equal hand to extend its encouragement to all faithful versions. Nothing, they conceive, is more to be deprecated by those who love it most, than that it should persist in a line of conduct which lays it open to the charge of suppressing any portion of God's truth. If such an allegation can be sustained against the Society, the warmest friends it has must condemn its policy, and all good men will approve the effort to recover it from so perilous a position.

Until the adoption of those proceedings which form the subject of complaint, the Baptist body took an equal interest

in the Society's labours with all other denominations, and they are still most earnestly desirous to be permitted to continue among its supporters. They will regard it as a calamity to be separated in such a cause from their fellow Christians; nor will they be the parties to sever the bond. If they must adopt an independent course of action it shall be because they are compelled. If they can no longer be fellow-labourers in the foreign field of Bible distribution, it shall be because they are thrust out.

Should they, on the one hand, be able to show that the terms proposed by the Committee of the Bible Society in order to the Baptist body receiving support to its versions are such as cannot be complied with, both because, as a general rule, they are impracticable, and, where practicable, morally subversive of the authority of conscience, and of the primary and imperative obligations of a translator of the inspired volume; and, on the other hand, that the proper course for the Bible Society to pursue is that for which the Baptist body pleads, the just conclusion will be obvious to every impartial mind; and the memorialists, having discharged their duty, will quietly leave the result to their brethren and to God.

The terms proposed to the Baptists by the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society are communicated in their resolution of the 1st of July, 1833.

which is expressed in the following words:—

“That this Committee would cheerfully afford assistance to the missionary connected with the Baptist Missionary Society in their translation of the Bengali New Testament, provided the Greek terms relating to baptism be rendered, either according to the principle adopted by the translators of the authorized English version, by a word derived from the original, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society.”

This resolution gives the translator the alternative of rendering the Greek terms relating to baptism, either by a word derived from the original, as is done in the English version, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by the other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society. It is alleged by the memorialists, that neither of these alternatives can be acted upon as a general rule.

They begin with the latter, and restrict themselves first to its application to their own case. And they respectfully ask, what terms they are which would describe baptism in a manner unobjectionable to all denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society? Where in any language can such terms be found? Until immersion, and sprinkling, and pouring, mean the same thing, or until there ceases to be a difference of opinion as to which of these modes is exclusively right, it is clear that no such terms are likely to be discovered. Moreover, if it be laid down as the rule, that Baptists, in their versions, must employ terms “unobjectionable” to non-immersionists, of course it must be the rule also, that non-immersionists must, in versions made by them, employ terms “unobjectionable” to Baptists, since they are one of the denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society. But the Baptist members of the Bible Society contend that the Greek words employed to describe the Christian rite have one meaning, and one only, and consequently, until that meaning, and that alone, were given, they could not cease to object.

There is, moreover, a fallacy involved in this part of the resolution of the Committee, the exposure of which deprives it of much of its apparent reasonableness, while it confirms what has just been said of its impracticability as a

rule. By “the other denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society,” are of course meant all who belong to it besides the Baptists. But it is overlooked, in this mode of putting the case, that, in relation to the question in hand, all these denominations merge into one. For all the purposes of this controversy, the Bible Society consists but of two sections, immersionists and non-immersionists; and it has the appearance, at least, of disingenuousness (though the memorialists do not impute it to the Committee) that it should be otherwise represented. As between these two parties then,—and there are no other within the view of the subject,—so long as one of them shall consider immersion, not an accident, but entering into the essential nature of the ordinance of baptism, while the other, professing to regard the mode as an indifferent circumstance, in practice altogether discards immersion, the rule must of necessity be perfectly inoperative. Ever to have conceived of it as laying a ground of union between them, was but a subtle delusion, and for the Bible Society now to persist in it must inevitably lead to separation.

But the spirit of this rule extends far beyond the particular case of the Baptists; and, impracticable as it is in reference to them, it is even more so when taken in that extent of application to which impartiality requires it should be carried. Did it not occur to the Committee, when assigning as a reason for laying down this rule, that the Bible Society is “composed of persons holding on this subject widely different opinions,”* that its members hold “widely different opinions” on other subjects also, subjects moreover affecting, some of them, not the ceremonial, but the vital doctrines of Christianity, and quite as likely to occasion embarrassment in the translation of the Scriptures? The episcopalian, the presbyterian, and the congregationalist, entertain views widely diverse from one another of the rendering of the terms *ἐπίσκοπος* *bishop*, *διάκονος* *deacon*, *πρεσβύτερος* *presbyter*, *ἐκκλησία* *church*. And besides these, as already intimated, there are disputed words relating to doctrines, such for example as *προγινώσκω* *to foreknow*, *προορίζω* *to predestinate*, *τετάγμενος* *ordained*, *ἐκλογή* *election*, *κλήσις* *calling*, *μετάνοια* *repentance*, *δικαίωσις* *justification*, *απο-*

* Resolutions, confirmed April 4, 1836.

λύτρωσις redemption. Of course these words must be subjected to the same process; nor these only, but every other respecting the signification of which denominations differ; a process which shall either convey them in an untranslated form into other languages, or translate them, not with scrupulous philological accuracy, but so as to unite the suffrages of controversialists. The Bible Society includes among its members, to say nothing of minor, or, in a theological point of view, less important sects, Protestants and Roman Catholics, members of the Greek church, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians. Is deference to be paid to the conflicting sentiments of these several parties? Is a translation of the word of God to speak nothing at variance with their peculiar and distinctive dogmas? Or, lest it should, are all words in debate among them to be left untranslated? It may be confidently put to every considerate person, if the former of these alternatives be not absolutely impossible; while, if the latter be adopted, the Scriptures might as well be withheld altogether, for they must thus become an unintelligible jargon.

The improbability of finding terms which shall express two or more meanings essentially differing from each other, as must be done if versions are to contain no words objectionable to the different denominations of Christians composing the Bible Society, is so obvious, that another sentence need not be written to expose the futility of the rule that requires it; but if it be thought that disputed terms may be transferred, let the experiment be made upon some of those already mentioned. In the following passages these Greek terms are expressed in words derived from the original:—“And when Jesus was come into Peter’s house, he saw his wife’s mother laid and sick of a fever; and he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose and diaconized them,” Matt. viii. 14, 15. “This is a true saying, if a man desire episcopacy, he desireth a good work,” 1 Tim. iii. 1. “Feed the flock of God which is among you, episcopising not by constraint, but willingly,” 1 Pet. v. 2. “For the gifts and eleasis of God are without repentance,” Rom. xi. 29. “Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your clesis and ekology sure,” 2 Pet. i. 10. “Even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto dicaosis of life,” Rom. v. 18. “In whom we have

apolutrosis through his blood,” Eph. i. 7. Is any thing further needed to demonstrate the absurdity of such a practice?

Nor is the difficulty thus stated an hypothetical case, suggested merely for the sake of illustration. It already presses in a practical form. “As was to be expected (says the Rev. W. H. Pearce, in a letter dated Calcutta, September 10, 1836), since the Bible Society interfered about baptism, the words above referred to* are become the subject of difficulty; and brethren in India, instead of translating the original terms for all of them, are at this moment about to introduce the Greek words into the native languages. Calling, Election, Justification, Redemption, &c., must in time follow: and the Christian church, in giving the New Testament, will then present to a heathen a work, although in his own language, perfectly unintelligible to the best informed of his countrymen.”†

This other alternative allowed by the resolution, of rendering the Greek terms relating to baptism by a word derived from the original, as is done in the English version, is no less incapable of general adoption on another ground. In the English version these words are left untranslated, the Greek terms themselves being used with an English termination; but there are some languages, perhaps many, into which it is impossible to transfer foreign words. The Chinese language is in point, which being written, not with alphabetic letters, but in monosyllabic characters, does not admit of the introduction of exotic terms in the manner prescribed. Not only, therefore, has Dr. Marshman translated the words in question, but Dr. Morrison also. Of the former indeed it might have been expected, agreeably with the uniform practice of the Baptists; but, in fact, neither of them was left to his option. They might select the words by which to translate; but translate they must, since to transfer is impossible. The Cherokee, as the memorialists have learned from competent authority, is another language into which, from the peculiarity of its construction, translators are compelled to give vernacular renderings. The pædobaptist missionaries accordingly, by whom a translation of the New Testament has been made for the

* Church, Congregation, Bishop, Bishoprick, Presbyter, Deacon, Deaconness, &c.

† *Bap. Mag.* 1837, p. 307.

use of that people, have not transferred the terms relating to baptism, but have translated them—and translated them by words signifying to immerse, and immersion.* Since in these instances the impracticability of the rule has been already ascertained, it is surely no improbable presumption, that there may be others; at all events these are sufficient to show that it must of necessity be of partial application.

But the Memorialists feel it to be their duty to present this objectionable resolution before the Committee of the Bible Society in another light; showing that, if it be impracticable as a general rule, it is equally to be condemned as subversive of the integrity of translators.

Granting that, in the particular case of the Baptists, the rule might be complied with in the Bengali version, and in all instances where the genius of the language allowed it, if not by translating the words in question into unobjectionable terms, yet by leaving them untranslated; this could be done only by putting human requirements in the place of conscience, and sacrificing truth and inspiration to expediency.

The memorialists would most respectfully beg the Committee to reflect upon the imperative obligations and solemn responsibility of a translator of the Sacred Scriptures, and then to consider if it would be right before God to bind him in the shackles imposed by their rule. He who undertakes to convey divine revelation into a new tongue, assumes an office with which scarcely another can be compared whose duties are equally momentous or responsible. By no quality of a moral kind ought he to be so eminently distinguished as by scrupulous conscientiousness. Unyielding integrity must be combined with literary ability, or he can never be deemed competent to his task. And as these qualities should be the guarantee, as far as his own character is concerned, that his work will be done faithfully, so ought he to be most jealously sheltered from every influence coming from without which might interfere with his judgment. His first, and last, and all-absorbing solicitude must be, to give the exact contents of the document, without suppression, without addition, and without alteration. If the meaning of a passage, or of a word, be hid under an unintelligible phrase, it might as well be omitted,

since that part of divine revelation is lost to the reader. The translator, in fact, defrauds him of so much of the truth. How, with the fear of God before his eyes, can he do this? How could the Committee of the Bible Society require him to do it? And yet this is what their rule demands. There are certain terms which, under peril of losing their support, he is not to translate. Though professedly occupied in giving to the heathen "all the words of this life," and bound to do so by obligations the most imperative and awful, as exactly and completely as his ability enables him, there are some words the meaning of which he must systematically withhold. And why? Because in themselves they are unintelligible? No such thing. Because the rendering he would give is unfaithful? Nothing of the kind; but because such rendering is considered objectionable by some of his fellow-christians who are members of the Bible Society. The question then comes to this, Are human opinions to control the Bible, or is the Bible to control human opinions? The Committee of the Bible Society say in effect the former; for their rule determines that, since the New Testament will not speak in a certain manner, it shall not speak at all. They insist that the meaning shall be pushed aside, blinked, studiously suppressed, where it does not harmonize with the creed of all the parties composing that institution. Who, it may be asked, that makes any claim to moral independence, would put his neck under such a yoke? What conscientious man could do it? With him it must be no question in what degree the meaning of the text may coincide with or differ from the sentiments or the practice of any section of the Christian church. His duty is plain and imperative. If he knows "the mind of the Spirit," he is bound to express it. Should he wilfully falsify the record by mistranslation, or should he "add to," or "take away from the words of the book," he would be held by common consent to have perpetrated a crime of the darkest hue. But the memorialists desire it may be seriously weighed, how far he falls short of the same censure who, in deference to the opinions of others, imposes a doubtful, or a double sense on the Scriptures, instead of scrupulously adhering to their exact grammatical interpretation; or who, by studious concealment, keeps back part of the counsel of God. For

* Christian Review, No. 1, p. 133.

themselves, they dare not risk the consequences of such a course, nor recommend it to their honoured missionaries. To act in this manner would, in their view, be to violate a solemn trust, to betray the truth, to endanger souls, and to hazard at least the tremendous judgments denounced in the closing sentences of the inspired canon. If the support of their fellow-christians in the work of biblical translation can be procured only at such a price, by them it cannot be procured at all. They must persist in urging upon their translators still to pursue the course marked out by the noble-minded Tyndale, who, in reference to his translation, says, "I call God to recorde as against the daye we shall appeare before oure Lorde Jesus Christ, to give reckonyng of our doinges, that I never altered one syllable of Godes word agaynst my conscyence, nor wolde do thys day, yf all that is in earthe, whether it be honoure, pleasure, or ryehes, myght be geven me."*

It avails nothing, the memorialists submit, against the force of this argument, that what is required of the Baptist translators is sanctioned by the English version; for the plea of precedent can never make that right which is in itself essentially wrong.

Besides which, waiving for the present their particular case, they entertain on many grounds the most serious objections against erecting that version into a standard for other translations. 1. It is well known under what circumstances the English authorised version was made. The translators were compelled by royal mandate to retain the old ecclesiastical words.† But he who imposes such a condition, and he who submits to it, are alike guilty of infringing the liberty of conscience, and of laying violent hands on the truth itself. Does the Bible Society wish to perpetuate the odious despotism of the Stuarts, by still putting fetters on the translators of the Bible? 2. Moreover, if the English version is to be followed in one instance, by analogy of reasoning it must be followed in all similar instances; and this would lead, in cases where a difference of opinion obtains, to that transferring of terms, the absurdity and impracticability

of which have been already shown. 3. How, again, is it possible for a conscientious translator to conform to this standard? The difficulties of translating, it might be supposed, are great and numerous enough without the aggravation which such a necessity implies. Instead of constructing his version, as an erudite philologist, according to sound canons of interpretation, he must recur at every step to the work of his English predecessors. His inquiry must be, not what is the true meaning of a passage, and how may it be rendered with fidelity, but what is the sense put upon it by the English version. Not what the uncorrupted originals may dictate must he follow, but the originals modified by the party views of polemical ecclesiastics, and the caprice of a semi-papistical monarch. A man who should translate on this principle, the memorialists hesitate not to say, would be totally unworthy of the office he had assumed; nor would it be safe to trust the conveyance of the words of life to the nations to his hands. 4. Still further, they would ask wherein the virtue consists of introducing the faults of the English version into new translations. Admitting, that under the circumstances of its production it is an admirable work, and even better executed in the main than might have been apprehended, no admirers of it have yet been so enthusiastic as to pronounce it immaculate. On all hands it is confessed to betray the marks of human imperfection. The Committee themselves say of it, "Errors are to be found in it which the humblest scholar could not only point out but correct. Errors too there are which obscure the sense in some important instances."* Why should these errors be propagated? If there be thought to be a necessity for leaving them uncorrected, at least let them remain where they are. If we must have them at home, let us not send them abroad. What benevolence is there in afflicting the heathen with our calamities? Every Christian would surely say, give them the unadulterated word, whatever you choose in regard to yourselves. If it be said the resolution of the Bible Society does not contemplate this, but refers only to certain words in which it requires the English version to be followed, the reply is obvious and conclusive—those very words constitute one of its most glaring faults. They are

* Letter to John Fryth.

† Historical Account of the several English Translations of the Bible, by Anthony Johnson, A.M., in Bishop Watson's Theological Tracts, Vol. iii. p. 96.

* Ann. Report, 1839, p. cxxi.

words, to all but Greek scholars, without a meaning; and the Bible Society determines that these same words in their unintelligibility shall be transferred into foreign tongues, thus for ever withholding from the heathen part of the Word of God. 5. And lastly, the memorialists cannot refrain from expressing both their surprise and deep regret that the British and Foreign Bible Society should seem in any way to give its sanction to the Popish practice of substituting a translation of the inspired volume as the standard of truth, in the room of the original scriptures. If Protestants are right in setting up one version as a model, how will it be shown that Romanists are wrong in putting that honour upon another? The decree of the Council of Trent and the resolution of the Committee in Earl Street, are in their principle exactly similar, and alike unsound and dangerous. The one confers infallibility on the Vulgate, the other makes the English version the judge, from whose decision there lies no appeal. For all the ordinary purposes of translation, indeed, the Greek New Testament may be used; but, where Christian denominations hold conflicting sentiments, it shall be instantly laid aside, or, what is the same thing, shall not be deemed of authority, nor be taken as the rule. Precisely in that crisis where the importance of having access to the original is chiefly felt, the Committee of the Bible Society takes it out of the translator's hand. Such a procedure, it is submitted, cannot be justified on Protestant principles. If it is to be defended, it must take shelter under the obnoxious plea that there resides an authority somewhere, and no matter where, whether in a general council of the Church of Rome, or in the Committee of the Bible Society, which has a right to modify the Word of God.

The memorialists venture to hope, that the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society will now see that their resolution of July 1, 1833, has placed that great institution in an unfortunate and unsafe position—a position of inextricable embarrassment, and inconsistent both with the claims of conscience, and with the deference due to that volume which it is its honour and duty to give to all people in their mother tongue.

The consistent course for the Bible Society to pursue would be, they con-

ceive, to give aid to all versions into new languages which, upon the authority of competent scholars, are ascertained to be faithful. They beg to trespass upon the continued attention of the Committee while they endeavour to show the reasonableness of the course they recommend.

It is obvious to remark, that such a principle of action is impartial. It favours no denomination at the expense of the rest, and it excludes none from its proper share of patronage through the jealousy of the rest. It gives credit to missionaries and translators of all sections of the Christian church for equal sincerity in their desires to communicate the tidings of "the common salvation." It leaves them to pursue their great work free from human embarrassment, and solely under the influence of their responsibility to God. The Baptist body, standing as they do on this plea of liberty, would be the last to deny it to their fellow-servants. If a Pædobaptist translator conscientiously believes that sprinkling or pouring is the meaning of βαπτίζω, let him thus render the word. As an honest man he is bound to do so; and if, upon the authority of competent scholarship, his version be certified to be faithful, let the Bible Society support it.

To act on this principle of supporting versions simply on the ground of their fidelity, would relieve the Bible Society from the irksome necessity of listening to denominational complaints, and of adjudicating in matters so much beside their province as differences in sentiment existing among them. By their present rule the Committee of the Bible Society erect themselves into a tribunal before which the various denominations composing it may severally bring their complaint, whenever words are used in a version which they consider objectionable. If Episcopalians render ἐπίσκοπος bishop, the Congregationalist complains; and if Congregationalists translate ἐκκλησία congregation, the Episcopalian is aggrieved. The Committee having, by the rule laid down, invited the appeal, are bound to hear the allegations of both parties, and to settle the difference; and the differences of all parties among the Bible Society who may conceive their peculiar views to be in a similar manner endangered. The Committee have done this in the case of the Pædobaptist complaint against Baptist versions, and of course equity demands that they should

not shrink from doing it in other instances. If it be replied, that, so far from taking upon themselves to settle the difference in the case of the Baptists, they declared* it to be "no part of the duty of the Committees or Sub-Committees to adjust such differences of opinion," and have therefore fallen back upon the practice resorted to in the English version, this is the very thing which settles it. The moment it is determined, in reference to any given word, that the translator shall conform to a particular model, or forfeit the Society's patronage, the whole question is closed; the difference is adjusted, and adjusted by the Committee. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the manner in which the Committee express themselves in part of the words just recited. Aware that it would impose upon them a most invidious and a perfectly hopeless task, were they required to mediate between contending denominations, and knowing that it forms no part of their duty as the executive of the Bible Society to attempt it, with great reason they may decline to undertake any such office. All the memorialists regret is, that they did not do so at first, and all they ask is, that they will retrace their steps, and always decline it in future. Would the Bible Society adopt the rule they recommend, a simple, uniform, and satisfactory answer would be given in every such case of complaint. The Committee, rising above all sectarian partialities, and standing on that catholic ground which was ever wont to be the foundation of the Society, would say, "Of denominational differences we take no cognizance here. We ask not, and we decline to know, in what respects versions may favour the views of any section of the Christian church, or be inimical to them. We patronize none but versions duly accredited for fidelity, and we patronize these alike."

Another advantage of this rule is, that it disencumbers the Committee of the Bible Society of the responsibility which belongs to the translators who make the versions, and the scholars who attest them. It is no reflection on the Committee to say, that this is a species of responsibility which they are altogether incompetent to assume. Nor could it have been supposed that it is a responsibility they were likely to covet. Who ever imagined that to them belonged the

functions of philologists and critics? By the resolution, however, of requiring translations to conform to the authorized English version in the words relating to baptism, they have imposed upon themselves this burden. It will surely provide them enough of difficult and unaccustomed labour to examine all the versions they take under their patronage, in order to ascertain that there be in none of them an infraction of the rule. The practice, moreover, of transferring words, if once adopted for the reason they assign, can never be restricted to those words. Many more, as the memorialists have shown, are in a precisely similar predicament. Either they must be transferred, or translated in a way against which no members of the Bible Society can object; and the Committee make themselves responsible to all the denominations that in every case this is done. It must be evident that no committee can discharge such a trust. They themselves tell us in their last report* that they know it to be impossible. "They are not ashamed to confess (they say) that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones is such, that they are compelled to shrink from it." How much is it to be regretted that they did not perceive this before they adopted a resolution which pledges them to undertake it! It is clear, however, that the resolution is now a mere nullity, and translators may expect that the undivided responsibility of versions will henceforth remain with them.

To adopt this plan, lastly, is the only way in which the Bible Society can discharge its duty as the dispenser of God's word to the nations. Any other will involve its conductors in the serious charge of tampering with the Scriptures. Once to take up the ground that fidelity is not the one great and paramount property which shall recommend translations to their assistance, is to quit the rock for the quicksand. It little matters then, whether the circumstance commending them be their conformity to a previously existing version, or the absence of terms unobjectionable to antagonist denominations, or any other circumstance upon which the Committee of the Bible Society may resolve to insist: the only safe position is abandoned. No security is thenceforth possessed against a thousand influences which, through the me-

* Resolutions of April 4, 1836.

* p. cxx.

dium of the Bible Society itself, may mutilate and corrupt the Bible. The object of that institution should no doubt be, above all things else and at all hazards, to give the contents of the inspired canon to foreign nations in the most perspicuous and perfect manner in its power; not a part of its contents, but the whole; not its contents modified or obscured, but as near as possible to their exact import, and written so plain that "he may run that reads." To the fact of the western nations not possessing the Scriptures in a complete form in their vernacular tongues is mainly to be attributed the prevalence of the grand apostacy. So at least the Bible Society believes, as a writer informs us, who it is understood is well known and in high estimation with the Committee, and the memorialists agree with him. "You believed (he says, addressing their senior secretary) that the chief success of the Romish priests in twisting to their own purpose certain doubtful or erroneous renderings, arose from their not giving to the people the *entire* word of God in a language which they could understand.*" If this really be the opinion held in Earl Street, it is in point of principle all the memorialists can desire, since it must make the Committee supremely anxious to give to the people of the East the "entire" New Testament, without concealment of a single word. They will only add, that the Christian community at large cannot but rejoice to know that the views of the Committee in relation to it are so definite and so just, and that, warned by the dreadful mischief that has ensued in Europe through leaving parts of the sacred record untranslated, they will vigilantly guard against any approach to that popish practice in the versions of Asia, and of all the rest of the world.

Will the Committee now allow the memorialists to recur to the rejected Baptist translations, and especially to the Bengali? Of this translation the most ample and unquestionable testimonials, vouching its faithfulness, were laid before the Committee of the Bible Society, when they were solicited to aid

its publication.* No imputation affecting its fidelity is indeed cast upon it either in India or in England. The Auxiliary Committee in Calcutta, at a full meeting, assembled for the purpose of deciding which they should adopt, were unanimous in giving it the preference; † and the Bible Society has accordingly printed a large edition of it in Calcutta, by consent of the Baptist missionaries; ‡ and subsequently, without their consent, under the supervision of Dr. Hœberlin, another edition, in the Roman character, with the English in opposite pages, § in London, substituting on their own responsibility the Greek words relating to baptism for those Bengali words which the translators had used. With this exception the memorialists believe they are correct in stating the translation as printed by the Bible Society to be in all respects what it was when it came out of the translator's hands: if there be any other difference they have not heard of it, nor have they any reason to suppose such a liberty would be taken. For though the Auxiliary Committee in Calcutta expressed a wish to make a "few other such alterations as a Sub-Committee of Bengali scholars should recommend," this proposal was declined by the missionaries, and does not appear to have been persisted in. || Why the alteration was made in the words relating to baptism appears from the resolutions of the Committee, and that reason is, not because they were translated unfaithfully, but simply because they were translated.

Here then is a translation of the New Testament, acknowledged on all hands to be the best which has hitherto been made into the Bengali language, which the Bible Society might give to the millions of heathen, for whom, with so much diligence and carefulness, it has been prepared, but which they will not give, solely because the words relating to baptism are translated by terms signifying immersion.

It will strike every considerate person, the memorialists conceive, that the Committee would not refuse to circulate such a translation for the reason assigned, unless that reason itself involved some strong ground for their decision, or were supported by extrinsic considerations of

* Remarks on a pamphlet recently circulated, &c., in two Letters to the Rev. A. Brandram, M.A. By T. H., understood to be from the pen of the Rev. Joseph Jowett, M.A., Superintendent of the Translating and Editorial Department.

* Letter from Baptist Missionaries, May 25, 1825. † Letter from Rev. W. Yates, Aug.

1, 1835. ‡ Ibid.

§ Bible Society's Report, 1839, p. lvii.

|| Letter from Rev. W. Yates, Aug 1, 1835.

great moment. Either it will be supposed that the translation in question is unfaithful, though the version in general be not so, or that it is an innovation, or contrary to the past usage of the Society, to circulate versions having these words so translated, or to its constitution, or else that it is sectarian. The memorialists think it due, therefore, to all parties concerned, to inquire how the matter stands in each of these particulars.

Is it then an unfaithful rendering which the Bengali version gives of these words? It is but justice to the Committee to acknowledge that they have never alleged any such objection. The utmost they have said of it is, not that immersion is an inaccurate translation, but that pædobaptists do not like it. On the contrary, its fidelity is tacitly admitted; for, if not, why is not its unfaithfulness exposed, and the whole dispute terminated at once?

Is the rendering, then, a novelty? Have the Baptists forsaken ancient and trustworthy guides, and introduced an unnecessary innovation? Let this question be determined when the following facts have been considered. Of all existing versions of the New Testament the Peshito Syriac is the oldest. "Michaelis pronounces it to be the very best translation of the Greek Testament which he ever read, for the general ease, elegance, and fidelity, with which it has been executed. It is confessedly of the highest antiquity, and there is every reason to believe that it was made, if not in the first century, at least in the beginning of the second."* Michaelis, after Father Simon,† shows also that it was made immediately from the original.‡ In this version the words in question are uniformly rendered as the Baptists translate them. Next in point of antiquity come the Coptic and Ethiopic versions, referred to the third or fourth centuries;§ about the middle of the fourth we have also the Gothic of Ulphilas.|| These all translate the words in the same way, and so also does the ancient Arabic. Among modern versions which translate by immersion are the Arabic of the Propaganda, of Sabat, and others in the same language, the German of Luther, the Dutch, the Danish, and the Swedish. Some modern versions

render the terms by washing or ablution. This is done in the Persian of Martyn; but he sometimes employs a phrase which can only mean ablution by dipping. The only other mode that has been adopted is that of retaining the Greek word. If, therefore, it be wrong to translate these words as the Baptist missionaries have done, it is at least a very ancient and a very general offence among translators. So far are they from standing alone, that, to use the words of the late lamented and learned Superintendent of the editorial department of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in his masterly defence of the Serampore Mahratta version, "it may be safely affirmed, that many of the most accurate and valuable versions, both ancient and modern, are involved in the same accusation; and that there is not one which is directly hostile to it." Let it now therefore be determined who are the innovators, the Baptists, who translate these words, or those who would keep them untranslated.

The Vulgate, it is true, and such of the Western versions as in this respect have been framed upon its model, among which is our authorized English version, retain the Greek terms. But, though they thus forsake the track of the Oriental versions, it is not, as is well known, because the translators understood the terms in another sense. To say nothing of continental scholars, whether Romanists or Protestants, the fathers of the Anglican church, Wicliff, Tyndale, Cranmer, and others, speak plainly on the subject, and so to this day does the Book of Common Prayer. But these were consecrated words; and superstition, church authority, and the command of a pedantic king, combined to hold them in their places, notwithstanding the manifest absurdity and criminality of thus muffling up the ordinance of Christ, till its fair but dishonoured countenance is no longer known. And will the Bible Society lend itself to this truth-suppressing practice? Will they not only sanction it, but resolve to sanction nothing else? Implicitly condemning the best and most ancient versions, and discountenancing those which, like them, speak, as the original Scriptures speak, in plain and intelligible terms, will they put a premium upon such a study to be obscure? The memorialists would ask, in the pertinent language of Dr. Campbell, "Does that deserve to be called a version, which conveys neither the mat-

* Horne, v. ii. p. 208. † Crit. Hist. v. ii. p. 119.

‡ Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii. c. vii. sec. iv.

§ Ibid. c. xiii. and xvii.

|| Ibid. vol. ii. c. vii. sec. xxxi.

ter nor the manner of the author? Not the matter, because an unintelligible word conveys no meaning; not the manner, because what the author said simply and familiarly, the translator says scholastically and pedantically. And if former translators have from superstition, from fear of giving offence, or from any other motive, been induced to adopt so absurd a method, shall we think ourselves obliged to imitate them? If (the church) herself has been any how induced to adopt a style that is not well calculated for conveying the mind of the Lord, nay, which in many things darkens, and in some misrepresents it, shall we make less account of communicating clearly the truths revealed by the Spirit, than of perpetuating a phraseology which contributes to the advancement of ignorance, and of an implicit deference in spiritual matters to human authority? On the contrary," (with him they would go on to affirm) "if the church has in process of time contracted somewhat of a Babylonish dialect, and thereby lost a great deal of her primitive simplicity, purity, and plainness of manner, her language cannot be too soon cleared of the unnatural mixture, and we cannot too soon restore her native idiom. To act thus is so far from being imputable to the love of novelty, that it results from that veneration of antiquity which leads men to ask for the old paths, and makes the votaries of the true religion desirous to return to the undisguised sentiments, manner, and style of holy writ, which are evidently more ancient than the oldest of these canonized corruptions."*

As it is no innovation of the Baptist missionaries to translate these words, so neither is it a novel thing for the Bible Society to circulate versions in which they are so translated. The Society has done this from the time it commenced the foreign distribution of the Scriptures, it has done it in every quarter of the globe, and it does it at the present time. The resolution of the Committee therefore comes too late to derive any sanction from usage. It would have formed an intelligible reason, at least, whatever might have been thought of its value, if they could have said, "We have never given aid to such versions, and cannot now begin." But they have no such plea. To say nothing of the various versions, both oriental and western, al-

ready mentioned, it appears from the last report, that the Bible Society has assisted in circulating upwards of 440,000 copies of the Scriptures in India alone—240,000 issued by the Calcutta Auxiliary, and 200,000 by the missionaries of Serampore; now as these versions were principally made by Baptists, the vast majority of the copies contain the words in a translated form. They cannot therefore even say that it is a new thing in Bengal.

The memorialists have however heard it replied that it was done in ignorance. How far this is borne out by facts the following statement will show. So far back as the year 1813, there is a letter from the Rev. A. Fuller, Secretary to the Baptist Mission, to the Rev. J. Hughes, in which the writer says, "In a letter which I lately received from Dr. Carey, he mentions having received one from you, inquiring in what way certain words were rendered in their translations. He wished me to inform you that they had rendered βαπτίζω by a word that signifies to immerse, and ἐπίσκοπος, by a word that signifies an overseer." Mr. Hughes replied, "I thank you for the information respecting Dr. Carey. The rendering which concerns baptism I might deem it proper to exchange for the undefined one adopted in our version, especially considering the circumstances under which oriental versions are proceeding. This, however, is submitted with deference, as an opinion from which I am sensible wiser and better men decisively differ."* Here then is evidence that, twenty-six years ago, one of the secretaries of the Bible Society was in correspondence on the subject, both with the Serampore translators, and with the principal officer of that Society by which they were sent out. Is it to be supposed, even though this were an unofficial correspondence, that it was profoundly kept in the breast of Mr. Hughes? Did he never mention it to either of his colleagues? Or, even beyond these individuals, was it never talked of among the members of the Committee, especially such as took a lead? If there were this total silence in doors on the subject, it is certain there was none out. This very correspondence was, as is remembered, the topic of free conversation in other circles; and even of debate at least at one, if not at more associations of ministers and

* Dissertation xi.

* Baptist Magazine, 1828, p. 65.

churches. It must be well known to those who have any experience in public societies, how often it happens that their functionaries or committee-men undertake, and are even desired, to make inquiries in an unofficial manner, which are nevertheless intended for the information of their conductors. But besides this, it will be seen by a reference to the early proceedings of the Bible Society, that the Baptist missionaries were from the first in habitual confidential communication with the Rev. D. Brown and the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, through whom, until an Auxiliary Committee was organized in Calcutta, the correspondence with the Bible Society relating to their versions was principally conducted. That organization took place in 1809,* and they were then officially associated with other gentlemen, and with the Parent Committee itself. Through this medium the missionaries received in the same year the first grant paid to them by the Bible Society amounting to 1000*l*. From their coadjutors, with whom by office they were now connected, it is not pretended that there was any concealment, as from Mr. Brown and Dr. Buchanan there had been none; and they must have had opportunity enough to have possessed themselves of the secret, if there had. The versions, moreover, as soon as published, were open to the inspection of all the world, and criticisms upon them were invited by public advertisement.† Very possible, indeed, it is, that the gentlemen composing the Committee when the grants were suspended were not acquainted with the facts of the case. It is possible, also, that those gentlemen might not know that so many other versions, to which they were giving, and to which their successors still continue to give their countenance, translate the words in the same obnoxious way, until it was brought before them by the present controversy. The Committee of the Bible Society, however, is elected every year; and it is not to be concluded, because the individuals composing it in 1833 may have been ignorant of a particular fact, that it was therefore unknown to their predecessors in office twenty years before. But what entirely destroys the little remaining force which this plea of ignorance may yet perhaps be thought to retain, is the circumstance that, after the Committee were informed

of the fact, they were still willing to exhibit their accustomed aid. For when application was first made to them for help in printing this Bengali version, though they had received a letter some time before from three Pædobaptist missionaries in Calcutta, requesting them on the very ground of these words being translated to withhold their grants from the Baptists, the Secretary of the Bible Society wrote to the Auxiliary in that city, stating that, if the version were a good one, it was the wish of the Committee to afford assistance.*

The memorialists would in this place add, that since the circulation of immersionist versions has been the practice of the Society from its first foreign operations up to the present time, and is its practice still; since this practice was commenced by the founders of the Institution, who framed its constitution, and enacted its laws; and since the first and only deviation from it is that which gives occasion to the present complaint; that deviation cannot have been made to vindicate its violated constitution, but is itself a violation of it.

But if neither of the preceding reasons can justify the Committee, there is yet another which may perhaps serve the purpose. The Baptist versions are "sectarian;" they uphold a party instead of subserving the general cause of christian truth; the tincture of bigotry poisons their catholicity, and renders them undeserving of the common support. If they are open to this charge, the memorialists themselves say, let them perish; the church and the world cannot be too soon freed from every trace of their existence. But, only asking how fidelity to the original can consist with sectarianism, unless the New Testament itself be sectarian, they are content to leave the defence of their translators in the hands of that late eminently gifted servant of the Bible Society, to whom they have before referred. "Bigotry," (says Mr. Greenfield) "that is, blind zeal and prejudice, they cannot justly be accused of, while they have the primitive sense of the term, and the rendering of so many ancient and modern translations, as the foundation upon which they have grounded their version; nor can they consistently be charged with sectarianism, while they are found in company with the churches of Syria, Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ger-

* Owen Hist. British and Foreign Bible Society, vol. i. 99, 277, 288; vol. ii. p. 14.

† Owen. vol. iii. p. 466.

* Letter of Baptist Missionaries, May 25, 1832.

many, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and others, together with the Church of England itself. If they be bigots, I know not what name the advocates for pouring or sprinkling, who have no such basis to rest on, merit; and if theirs be a sect, it must be confessed to be a very ancient, and a very extensive one."

"But there is another point of view," he continues, (and while he writes these memorable words, he says, as a preface to them, 'I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I am neither a Baptist, nor the son of a Baptist') "there is another point of view in which the opponents of the Serampore Missionaries should consider the subject; and one which involves the most important consequences. Before they arraign the British and Foreign Bible Society as guilty of a gross and unpardonable dereliction of duty in aiding the Serampore translators, and prefer a recommendation for them to withdraw that aid, they should be fully prepared to carry their censure, as well as their recommendation, to a much greater extent. In consistency, if that aid be withdrawn from the Serampore Missionaries because they have rendered βαπτίζω to *immerse*, then must it also be withdrawn from the churches of Syria, of Arabia, of Abyssinia, of Egypt, of Germany, of Holland, of Denmark, &c.; and the venerable Peshito-Syriac version, the Arabic versions of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c.; the Ethiopic, the Coptic, and other versions must all be suppressed. If, however, they are not thus prepared to carry their recommendation to its fullest extent, then must they close their mouths for ever against their Baptist brethren. But should a faction so far prevail over the good sense of the Committee, and the sound and catholic principles upon which the Society is founded, and which have ever been its boast and glory, as well as the most powerful means of its extraordinary success, then its 'honour will be laid in the dust;' and from a splendid temple, in the service of which the whole Christian world could cordially unite, it will dwindle into a contemptible edifice, dedicated to party feelings, motives, and views. The broad basis upon which it is founded is its strength and security; contract this within narrower limits, and it falls into ruins."

Such, in its general merits, is the case of the Baptist versions; and on the

grounds thus laid, the memorialists, with great respect, renew their application for aid. They are induced to this measure principally by two considerations;—first, because they know that in some quarters among their Pædobaptist friends their claim on the Bible Society is acknowledged to be just; while the Committee, in their last Annual Report, concede, when vindicating their own conduct in reference to certain other versions, all that the memorialists plead for in relation to their own: and next, because they are most unwilling to proceed in any steps of separate organization for raising funds to print and circulate them, until the Committee shall have told them again, if indeed they will tell them so, that the Bible Society determines to cast them off.

It will be in the recollection of the Committee, that the Baptist Missionary Society applied for aid towards the Bengali version first in the autumn of 1832, and again in February, 1836. The second application, however, was not a repetition of the first; it differed materially in its character. Though the Baptist body felt deeply aggrieved that, for the first time in the history of the Bible Society, its Committee had frowned upon the efforts of their missionaries in the field of Bible translation, where they had acquired so just a celebrity, they still loved the Institution; and for the sake of preserving the harmonious co-operation in which, through so many years, they had been joint labourers in giving to the millions of India the word of life, they were willing to accept a grant simply for the use of their own churches. Instead, therefore, of standing upon the ancient ground of asking that they might be enabled to put the version into general circulation, they requested only "a small supply" for themselves; and this they conceived might have been the more readily complied with, as their missionaries were about to print a large edition for the general purposes of the Bible Society, with the words relating to baptism altered. This second application, however, shared the fate of the first.

It may not be improper to mention, that this application was preceded, at the instance of the Committee of the Baptist Mission, by a personal conference between the noble President of the Bible Society, attended by its principal officers, and a deputation from them; so desirous were they of leaving no method

untried by which they could hope to preserve the friendly understanding that had always hitherto subsisted between the two institutions.

Again repulsed, it became a matter of anxious deliberation whether now the Baptist body ought not to take immediate steps to originate that support which the Bible Society denied. But they yielded to mild counsels. Reluctant to the last degree to resort to a course which should separate them in any measure from the Bible Society, they resolved to make another effort to bring things back into their old channel. A document was accordingly prepared, setting forth in the form of a protest the principal reasons sustaining their cause; and, having received the signatures of considerably more than 500 of their ministers, it was presented to the Committee in March of the following year. But this also failed. At this stage of the business, the whole case was reviewed and argued from the press by one of their ministers, standing deservedly high in the esteem of his brethren, in a letter to Lord Bexley; but though this pamphlet was extensively circulated, remains unanswered, and is known to have had considerable influence upon individual minds, it has effected no change in the Committee. And thus the matter at present stands.

This brief recapitulation of circumstances the memorialists conceive, must show that the Baptist body has not been hasty to redress its wrongs; that it has evinced a scrupulous and tender regard to the character of the Bible Society, using all proper means to prevent a rupture, and to induce the Committee to retrace their steps; and that, if, making still one pacific movement more, it should unhappily be foiled in that, there remains no other course for it to adopt than, trusting in God, and seeking aid wherever it may be found, to enter upon that department of Scripture distribution from which, amidst its deepest regrets, the Bible Society retires.

This final overture for a restoration of concord is now made. The memorialists have the means of knowing that, in the document they now place before the Committee, they represent the sentiments of their denomination throughout the United Kingdom. Once more, therefore, they entreat the Committee to rectify the cause of their complaint, and not to force from the bosom of the Bible Society a whole denomination of Chris-

tians who were amongst its earliest and most useful friends. They confess themselves not without hope of a favourable issue, from certain indications of altered views which have much cheered their minds. To individuals it would not be decorous more explicitly to refer; leaving, therefore, those highly-respected ministers not of their body, who nevertheless coincide with them in opinion as to the duty of the Society, to use their influence in whatever manner they may prefer, the memorialists would call the attention of the Committee to their own language in the conclusion of their last Report.

In that Report the Committee enter upon the vindication of their conduct, in answer to the charge of another society, in circulating certain versions on the continent of Europe which are alleged not to be "genuine versions of the Word of God." In the course of their exculpatory observations, the following passages occur:—

"They would begin (they say) with remarking that they have always been aware that these versions are justly open to much exception."

"They would also beg to state that, taking the calmest view of all the passages objected to, they do not find that any thing essential is involved."

"They are aware of their many and serious defects; but they are not ashamed to confess, that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones, is such that they are compelled to shrink from it. They bid God speed to all who may make attempts of this kind, and shall rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed; but they know that success must be a work of time; and, in the meanwhile, they feel themselves justified in using imperfect versions—versions which bear many marks of the infirmities, not always excusable, of the translators."

"Your Committee now turn to the real question which the Society has to consider—Does the amount of erroneous translation, or of even corrupt translation, to use the stronger term, justify the condemnation and consequent abandonment of the versions referred to, as unworthy to be called the Word of God? Your Committee think a satisfactory conclusion in the negative may be arrived at, by the following considerations:—"

The memorialists quote the first.

"No version is perfect—no version is to

be found but what contains acknowledged error, and, in a great many instances, error that might be corrected. Your Committee are persuaded that if even the English authorized version were dealt with in the same manner as the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslations might be presented, which would, with equal justice,* give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the Word of God? Errors are to be found in it, which the humblest scholar could not only point out, but correct. Errors, too, there are which obscure the sense, in some important instances."

In still further vindication of themselves, they add that, "In giving such versions to the people in their respective countries, it has been regarded as a duty to give them *as they are*, and not to attempt to alter and improve them. They have been given, with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title page: and your Committee have ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people, 'This is the book known and recognized by your own church.'"

"Great as may be the variations between the English and the Portuguese, or any other version circulated by the Society, they all teach substantially one and the same truth:—they set forth the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. They all proclaim who and what the Saviour is,—his proper Deity—his one great sacrifice for sin—his intercession with the Father—his coming again to judgment—man's guilt, condemnation, and helplessness—the Holy Spirit's grace, power, and work. They are all, your Committee solemnly believe, able to save the souls of men; 'to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' They all say, 'Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.'"

And they ask, "Are there not individuals in considerable numbers—are there not congregations to which the Society might point, and with reference

* "The Committee are surprised to find that this expression has been misapprehended. "With equal justice"—that is, if justly in one case, justly also in the other. According to the view taken by the Committee, they might have said, "With equal injustice;" and that this was their meaning sufficiently appears from the sentence which occurs towards the conclusion of this paragraph." *Report*, p. cxxi.

to which they might, accommodating the words of the apostle, say, 'Ye are the seal of our apostleship?' Are there not, in other words, many now 'the children of light,' and walking as such, who gratefully acknowledge that *they owe their all* to some of these very condemned versions?—who confess that the light which they have, beamed upon them from these very pages?—who, now rejoicing in the Lord as their Righteousness, have learned the sacred truth from these translations?"

And they conclude in a paragraph which commences with the following sentence:

"Your Committee have thus simply stated the principle upon which, with regard to their versions, they have acted in years that are past; together with the reasons which seem to justify their adherence to that principle in years to come."

On these passages the memorialists beg to submit to the consideration of the Committee the following remarks.

These European versions, it is said, the Committee have always known to be "justly open to much exception," and "they are aware of their many and serious defects." Still they circulate them, and circulate them not with hesitation, as though it were a thing of doubtful propriety; but they say, "they feel themselves justified in using imperfect versions—versions which bear many marks of the infirmities, not always excusable, of the translators."

Let it then be conceded that the Bengali and other Baptist versions are "imperfect versions"—imperfect, that is, of course, not in general execution; for it was never pretended they were exempt from the characteristic of all human performances—but imperfect in the rendering of the particular words; let it even be conceded that in this rendering they betray the inexcusable infirmities of the translators; still, by the Committee's own showing, they ought not on this account to have been rejected. When this charge is brought against the Portuguese version, the Committee say, "We know it is a just charge, but we shall continue to circulate notwithstanding." When it is brought against the Baptist versions, the Committee say, "Whether it be a just charge or not we give no opinion, but we shall withdraw our support." Is this treatment of the different versions equal? Is it right?

But perhaps the reasons by which the

Committee vindicate themselves in the case of the European versions are such as justify the distinction. What then are they? As the memorialists gather them from the Report, they are the following:

1. "Taking the calmest view of all the passages objected to, the Committee do not find that any thing essential is involved." These passages no doubt might have suppressed fundamental truth, or have inculcated fatal error. It appears they do neither; for thus it is imagined the Committee must mean their words to be understood when they say, "they do not find that any thing essential is involved;" and they consequently deem them worthy of support. But will the Committee show what fundamental truth is suppressed, or what fatal error is inculcated, when βαπτίζω is translated to immerse? Baptists are accused of attaching an undue importance to their mode of administering the Christian rite; but where will the accusation lie now? Though they have the concurrent testimony of antiquity, of versions, and of criticism on their side, they never insisted upon immersion as a fundamental truth; but the Committee of the Bible Society do what is equivalent to this—they proscribe it as though it were a fatal error.

2. The next reason assigned by the Committee is, that, as they can neither make versions nor revise them, they thankfully avail themselves of the labours of those who can, even though much imperfection may blend with them. "They are not ashamed to confess (they tell us) that the magnitude of the attempt to form new versions, or to revise existing ones, is such that they are compelled to shrink from it. They bid God speed to all who may make attempts of this kind, and will rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed."

Attempts of this kind the Baptist missionaries have made, with what success the former records of the Bible Society sufficiently declare.

It might well be deemed superfluous to eulogize the biblical labours of Dr. Carey and his colleagues. Their reputation in this important department of Christian philanthropy is too well founded, and too universally acknowledged by learned men of all communities, to be called in question now. Of the competency of Dr. Yates and the brethren associated with him to succeed to the work of translation, the testimonies

to the Bengali version already laid before the public, and its acknowledged superiority to all preceding versions in that language, are ample proof. Why then, since the Committee affirm that they bid God speed to all who make attempts of this kind, and rejoice unfeignedly if they succeed, do they not "bid God speed" to them? Why, instead of bidding them God speed, do they weaken their hands, and use the influence of that great confederation of Christian communities to discredit their versions? Again the memorialists have to ask if this is worthy of the Bible Society? if it is just? if it is in harmony with the professions of the Committee?

3. The Committee inquire, as a third reason, "Does the amount of erroneous translation, or even of corrupt translation, to use the stronger term, justify the condemnation and consequent abandonment of the versions referred to as unworthy to be called the word of God;" and they "think a satisfactory conclusion in the negative may be arrived at." Among the considerations by the help of which they arrive at this conclusion, is the fact, that "no version is perfect;" and "that if even the English authorized version were dealt with in the same manner as the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslation might be presented, which would with equal justice (or, as they say in a note, with equal injustice) give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the word of God?"

Here then are versions, of which it is alleged that there is in them "an amount of corrupt translation," or to take the milder term of "erroneous translation," which gives rise to the question if they can be considered the word of God. The inference drawn from the errors they contain, and insinuated in the question, is indeed denied, but the fact of the existence of these errors or corruptions is admitted. If the Committee of the Bible Society will patronize these versions with their admitted amount of corrupt translation, or of erroneous translation, *a fortiori*, they ought to patronize another version, against which no corruption at all, and even no error is alleged; for its rejection has never been grounded on the charge of corrupt translation, or even of erroneous translation, but only on a translation which pædobaptists disapprove. "If the English authorized version," moreover, it is said, "were dealt with in the same manner as

the Portuguese, an amount of individual mistranslation might be presented, which would with equal injustice give rise to the question, Can such a version be called the word of God?" What injustice then would be done it, if it were dealt with in the same manner as the Bengali? That version is condemned as unworthy of the Bible Society's support. Not simply is it interrogatively insinuated that such a version cannot be the word of God, it is practically treated as though it were not. With all the mistranslations of the English version, and all the erroneous or corrupt translations of the Portuguese version, they are circulated; but with no alleged mistranslation, no corrupt translation, or even erroneous translation, the Bengali version is abandoned. Again the memorialists must ask if this is a consistent proceeding?

4. In the fourth place, the Committee say, that "in giving such versions to the people in their respective countries, it has been regarded as a duty to give them as they are, and not to attempt to alter and improve them. They have been given, with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title-page; and your Committee have ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people—"This is the book known and recognized by your own church."

In this remarkable passage, remarkable for its pertinency to the case in hand, there are at least three distinct admissions, each of which concludes against the decision of the Committee.

1. In the first place, they say they regard it as a duty not to attempt to alter and improve versions, but to give them as they are. Had the Committee forgotten when they penned this sentence, what they did to the 5000 copies of the Bengali version, or did they in that instance intentionally violate their regard to duty? The memorialists are loath to impute the latter; they think that upright men would not wilfully do wrong. But if it were forgetfulness of duty, and not intentional violation of it, the Committee will immediately set themselves right.

2. Versions "are given with all their faults, for what they are, with the name of the translator on the title-page." In other words, the Committee do not take upon them the responsibility of translations, but leave that to be borne by the

translator. As it is no duty of theirs to attempt to alter and improve what he may have done, so his name on the title-page tells all the world that the Committee have left the translation untouched. And what besides this have the Baptists ever asked? "Give our versions (we respectfully say) for what they are." We have never desired to shift the responsibility, our whole complaint is that we are not suffered to take it.

3. The "Committee has ever deemed it of importance to be able to say, through their distributors, to the people—This is the book known and recognized by your own church." The memorialists are again compelled to recall to the remembrance of the Committee circumstances which they must have forgotten. Not "ever" have they done this. In one instance, at least, it was thought of no importance. The Baptists were content to have taken "a small supply" for the use of their own people; and they would have said to them, as they presented the New Testament in the capacity of the Committee's distributors—"The Bible Society gives you this as the book known and recognized by your own church." But the boon was denied. The Committee, in effect, have said, the Roman Church shall have their version in Portugal, the Episcopalian in England, the Lutheran in Germany, the Pædobaptists in China; but the Baptists shall not have theirs. If the Bible Society can accomplish it, not only shall immersion as a mode of baptism, be banished from every other church in India, it shall be suppressed in the Baptist itself. Again, the memorialists put the question, Is this generous treatment? Is it worthy of an Institution which is meant to comprehend all churches, and to exclude none?

4. The fourth reason by which the Committee defend their support of Roman Catholic versions is, that, great as may be the variations between them and the English version, "they all teach substantially one and the same truth. They set forth (the Committee say) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. They all proclaim who, and what the Saviour is, his proper Deity, his one great sacrifice for sin, his intercession with the Father, his coming again to judgment; man's guilt, condemnation, and helplessness; the Holy Spirit's grace, power, and work. They

are all, your Committee solemnly believe, able to save the souls of men; 'to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' They all say, 'Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.'

It were needless to spend five words in showing that this reason is alike applicable to the Baptist versions.

5. The past usefulness of the European versions is assigned as the last reason for their retention. But whatever weight there may be in this argument, it pleads at least with equal, if not with superior force, for the versions of the Baptists. With what propriety might it not be inquired, in the very language of the Committee, "Are there not individuals in considerable numbers, are there not congregations, to which the Society might point, and with reference to which they might, accommodating the words of the apostle, say, 'Ye are the seal of our Apostleship?' Are there not, in other words, many, now 'the children of light,' and walking as such, who gratefully acknowledge that *they owe their all* to some of those very condemned versions? who confess that the light which they have, beamed upon them from these very pages? who, now rejoicing in the Lord as their righteousness, have learned the sacred truth from these translations?" Who more appropriately shall be called the apostle of Bengal than William Carey? By whom have Christian churches been planted in British India, if not by Baptist missionaries? And by whose labours were the missionaries throughout that vast territory of every denomination provided with the Scriptures, but by Baptist translators? By "these very condemned versions" how many heathens have been led to renounce their "abominable idolatries?" How many triumphs have been achieved over the Shasters and the Koran? How many of the most abject and down-trodden vassals of Satan have been lifted up to a communion with Infinite purity and love? How many voices, once frantic with the yells of demons, are now attuned to "the song of Moses and the Lamb?" If past usefulness shall be a plea with the Committee, let them think of the moral change which has taken place, and is still in progress, over the whole extent of our Indian Empire; let them think of caste broken, suttee extinguished, native schools opened, female education instituted, Christian churches formed, benevolent institutions

founded, opposition silenced, and Governments themselves enlisted on the Bible's side; let them think of the thousands of converts to the Christian faith, of the hundreds of native agents variously employed in its propagation; of Krishna, Rammohun, Sébukram, Ramprasad, Aratoon, Soojatullee, and numbers more, Hindoos or Mussulmans once, becoming preachers of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God;" let them listen to the recital of facts such as every missionary can tell them coming from the plains of Hindostan, to the alarmed apprehensions of Brahmins of the downfall of their ancient mythology, and to the glowing hopes of Christians of the approaching universal triumph of Christianity; and let them remember, that, so far as these effects are to be attributed to the Scriptures at all, they are to be mainly attributed to these condemned and abandoned versions of the Scriptures, for there were no other; and then let them consider, if the plea of usefulness is to prevail, whether these circumstances do not establish an irresistible argument for their re-instatement in the patronage of the Bible Society.

In conclusion, the Committee tell the public, that they have thus "stated the principle upon which, with regard to their versions, they have acted in years that are past, together with the reasons which seem to justify their adherence to that principle in years to come."

To the uniformity, however, with which they have acted upon this principle, their conduct towards the Baptists forms an exception. The memorialists believe, and they rejoice to believe, that it is the solitary exception. They sincerely hope that no other faithful versions of the Scriptures have been treated as theirs have been, or ever will be. It may be enough for any body of Christians to have taken a resolution only in one instance, which, however unintentionally on their part, will not let God speak the whole revelation of his will in a language that can be understood. The memorialists are aware that this is putting the case plainly and solemnly. Solemnly they wish to put it, and with plain-spoken truthfulness. They impute no evil motives, they believe none existed in the minds of the Committee; on the contrary, they are persuaded those excellent persons who passed the resolution acted under a conviction that they were doing what duty required at their hands. But that such conviction was founded in error, cannot, they con-

ceive, be a matter of doubt, now the consequences which their resolution involves are apparent. Looking at the subject, not in the light simply of a difference of opinion between Baptists and Pædobaptists, but in its whole extent of application to the great work of Bible translation, and at the consequences which must ensue, either as translators shall feel themselves bound to give the entire Scriptures without concealing any part, or at liberty to evade translation, or to translate on a principle of accommodation and compromise; the memorialists must confess, that no language they can employ would adequately represent their views of its importance. They have accordingly desired to deal with it, not as a party question, but as a grave matter of Christian morals, in the decision of which the whole church of Christ is concerned. As a party question by no fairness of representation can it be exhibited. With that volume before them which is their Heavenly Father's gift to the whole human family, and which they and the rest of the Christian church hold in trust for all their brethren of mankind, mere party questions sink in their esteem into unutterable insignificance. They plead not for the advantage of their own denomination, but for common principles, in which there ought to be a concurrence amongst all denominations. They plead for the restoration of harmony, for a return to the ancient paths, the good old ways in which the Bible Society used to walk, and in which, towards all but themselves, its determination is declared to walk in future—in a word, they plead for the consistency and honour of the Bible Society itself.

Time was, when in concluding one of their Annual Reports,* the Committee could say,

“Let it not be forgotten, that the basis of the Society is as ample as ever. There the various communions of Christians have enjoyed communion with each other. There, within the range of the United Kingdom, the Episcopalian has delighted to meet and encourage, and to be met and encouraged by, his brethren of other names. There they have mutually learned, that brethren they are, and there they indulge the hope that brethren they shall remain, and dwell together in unity. There they have mingled their sympathies with the brethren of the Lutheran and the Reformed churches of the Continent. There they have witnessed with delight, the breathings of the pious Roman Catholic, and have hailed the approach of the Greek and Armenian, the Syrian, the Copt, and the Chaldee Christian. All, of every name, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, have gladly extended to each other the right hand of fellowship.”

But should the Committee in an evil hour, turn a deaf ear to the pleadings of the memorialists, the time they describe in these glowing terms is gone. One denomination of Christians who trust they may, nevertheless, humbly aver that they “love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,” is expelled from the fraternal union; or, if they still retain a place as contributors—which numbers of them will—and, if one or two of their body are continued on the Committee—as probably they may—their translations are discarded, their churches are aggrieved, and they no longer unite on terms of equality. Christians of every other name, and in their distinctive names, may still extend to each other the right hand of unbroken friendship; but henceforth, though still extended, the right hand of a Baptist none may take.

* A.D. 1829.

AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION,

Held Dec. 17, 1839,

THOMAS PEWTRESS, Esq., in the Chair.

Resolved unanimously,—That the cordial thanks of this Committee be presented to the Rev. E. Steane, for the highly valuable Memorial to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which he has drawn up by the desire of this Committee, and now read.

Resolved unanimously,—That the document now read be adopted as the Memorial of this Committee, and be presented as such to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at their next meeting, by the Rev. Edward Steane, the Rev. John Dyer, and the Rev. J. H. Hinton, A.M.

Camberwell, Feb. 28, 1840.

DEAR SIR,—By direction of the Committee of the Baptist Union, I transmit you the preceding Memorial. Agreeably with the instructions of the Committee, it was presented by the deputation appointed for the purpose to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at their meeting of January 6th. On the 28th of the same month their answer was received, in which they adhere to their previous determination not to grant aid to our translations of the New Testament, and conclude by calling upon us to re-consider the subject. The steps proper to be taken having been matter of serious and protracted deliberation, the Committee of the Union, at its meeting on the 2nd instant, unanimously adopted the subjoined Resolutions.

A Provisional Committee has been appointed to carry these resolutions into effect; and I have to request that you will oblige me with any communication you may kindly make on this subject in compliance with the last of them, on or before the 18th of March.

I am, my dear Sir, yours faithfully,

EDWARD STEANE,

Secretary, *pro tem.*

I. Resolved unanimously,

That this Committee having attentively considered the communication of the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in reply to the Memorial, are deeply concerned to find that, upon an answer to that document so inconclusive—some of the main points of the case being evaded, others misrepresented, and none disposed of in a satisfactory manner—they should persist in rejecting versions of the New Testament admitted to be faithful; the only allegation against them being, that the rendering of a certain word, with an honest adherence to what the translators believe to be its exact meaning, is found by the Committee to be unacceptable to some of their constituents.

II. Resolved unanimously,

That in the opinion of this Committee, the answer to the Memorial lays no new ground on which the Memorialists can with propriety be required to re-consider their position. That position, taken at first upon mature deliberation, and strengthened by seven years' reflection (during which time the subject has been in debate) cannot now be abandoned, unless it may be shown that it is right to sacrifice conscience to views of expediency, or to suppress the meaning of some part of the word of God. The resistance to it manifested by the Committee of the Bible Society, this Committee are moreover convinced rests on grounds which are utterly untenable, whether considered in relation to sound canons of biblical translation, to the first and most imperative duty of translators, to the constitution and past usage of the Bible Society, to its present practice in other instances, or to those obvious and just principles on which alone it can proceed in such cases with honour or safety.

III. Resolved unanimously,

That the continued refusal of the Committee of the Bible Society to support the versions of the New Testament made by the Baptist missionaries, notwithstanding their admitted superiority and unquestioned faithfulness, leaves the Baptist body no alternative, after seven years' endurance of the wrong, and the employment

all proper methods to obtain redress, but to seek support for them by an appeal to the Christian public through an organization formed for that purpose; a measure which will be adopted with extreme reluctance, but which the Committee of the Bible Society has forced upon them by its inequitable decision.

IV. Resolved unanimously,

That a Society be accordingly formed, of which the following be proposed as the Constitution and Rules.

1. The name of this society shall be, The Bible Translation Society.
2. It shall be the object of this Society to encourage the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the different languages of the world, by aiding the circulation of such versions by Baptist missionaries and others as are competently authenticated for fidelity.
3. Each subscriber of £1 ls. per annum shall be a member.
4. Each subscriber of £10 10s. at one time shall be a member for life.
5. An Executor paying a bequest of £19 19s. and upwards shall be a member for life.
6. The management of the Society shall be vested in a Committee, with a Treasurer and Secretary.
7. An Annual Meeting of Subscribers shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the Committee, when the proceedings of the year shall be reported, and the Committee and Officers elected.
8. Every minister subscribing £1 ls. per ann., or who has made a collection within the preceding year for the Society, shall be entitled to attend and vote at all meetings of the Committee.

V. Resolved unanimously,

That the Memorial, with a Circular containing the preceding resolutions be sent to every Baptist minister throughout the kingdom, with the request that he will immediately communicate with the brethren and churches in his district, in order to a systematic and vigorous co-operation, and cause this Committee to be apprized at the earliest opportunity of the result.



